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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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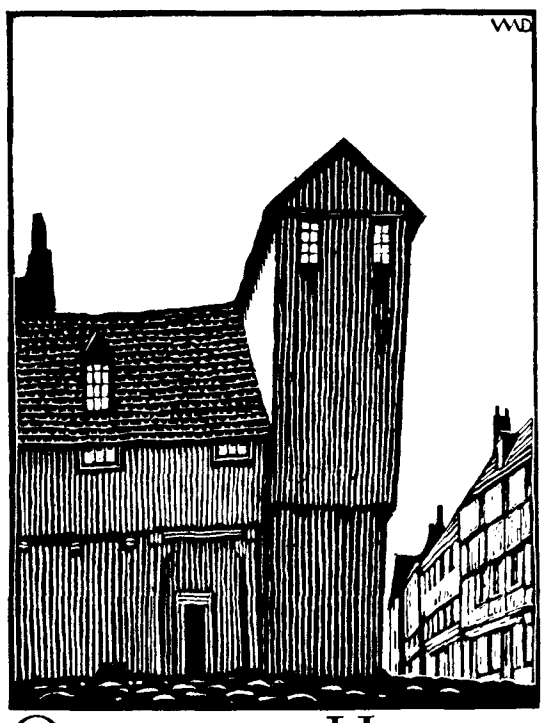

OMINOUS HOUSE

The door dark whispered woe, the panes blank fire,
The rearing gable like a reptile's head—
For fiend or nightmare would you fain inquire?
Enter, and hark the dithering of the dead!

Deepness of Earth

THE foreign lecturer (and perhaps any lecturer) with a "message" has become a nuisance, but when the lecturer is himself a message, complaint is voided. Matthew Arnold, so it is said, was seldom heard beyond the first three rows of his audience, and yet the man stood for so much in himself that he seems to have left a deep impression behind him. Those who could not hear, apparently felt.

A. E., who has been with us for some weeks now, has also made more than a usual impression upon American audiences. He can be heard, and the soft Irish-English that comes through his great beard is readily comprehensible, but it is what the man palpably is that seems to count. For here is a hearty, humorous mystic who has lived in the depths of a nation, and radiated energy, ideas, inspiration for a third of a century, a man tolerant in a time of hate and bitterness, constructive when destruction was the only fashion, confident of the spiritual power of devotion to an ideal, while self-seekers, fanatics, and the predatory raged at each other and tore Ireland to pieces. It is not hard to be a dreamer, it is not hard to be a "booster," it is not hard to be a martyr, devoted leadership is not rare, but to keep a sense of human values in times of great disorder or great success is given to few men large enough of mind and soul to count in history.

We do not envy Ireland its distractions, but we do envy its George Russells. No one seems to be thinking as he is thinking, on this side of the Atlantic. Americans do not even quarrel over values. We have committed ourselves so completely to a state where every individual has his share of comfort, his right to noise, his opportunity for a formal education, his means of cheap transportation, his privilege of reading two newspapers a day, that questions as to the quality of our living seem impertinent. There are scolders and deriders of course, but they are noisier than their audiences, and have no plan of salvation except a "don't" or a "stop." Thoreau, who was regarded as a harmless fool by his Concord neighbors, would be certified a lunatic in any suburb to-day. And yet, like the makers of the Irish renaissance as Russell describes them, all he wanted was to make the world without correspond to the mind within, so that an American could keep his soul his own in a not too hostile New England. Thoreau *really* believed that without vision a nation perishes. So does George Russell, and by vision both mean not emotional rhetoric or moral diatribes, or tiresome conformity, but the perception of values which belong to a rounded life where the spirit is as comfortable as the body. Russell has made coöperative farming successful in Ireland. He is an economist as well as a poet. But where is the American dirt farmer who stands upon a platform of better ideas, more spiritual happiness, more depth of living, for the agriculturist? Give us higher wages, the unions say, and we will take care of the spiritual values. Keep the country prosperous and we will guarantee its civilization, say the capitalists. It was not thus that Emerson reasoned.

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Indeed, the draining of idealism from American literature is made painfully evident by the mere presence of such powerful idealism as George Russell's. Our skilful journalism, our highly competent realism, our sudden grip upon the weapons of satire and irony, are well enough, but there is a kind of spiritual provincialism in a widespread literature that assumes an exclusive interest in complexes, abnormalities, material success and failure, neurotic relationships, the form, the noise, the by-products of life in the busy streets. And if, to modern Americans, there is something naive in an Emerson who insists on believing that every New Englander has the soul of an incipient genius, or in a George Russell who expects his poets to create revolution and his mystics to be the men chosen to direct practical affairs, is it not we perhaps who are the naive ones, when we assume that prosperity will take care of the prosperous, and believe that a nation can be bred on tabloids and educated in the science of getting on, can find happiness where the advertisements tell us to buy it, and satisfaction in the life depicted for us in our books?

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We are spread very thin over this continent, and even in New York we go upward (toward, not into, the skies) far easier than downward. Sometimes as one reads the thin competent poetry of our city dwellers and the strident realism of our novelists, or notes the rarity of the contented man in America, the nervous inability to sit and meditate, the good-humored fear of emotion, the failure to take pleasure easily, the utter divorce between women particularly and such permanent qualities of their environment as sky, soil, and sun, it does not seem to be spirituality we lack as yet, for we have scarcely reached its possibilities, but just common sense.

The Ninth Volume of the "Ashley Library," a catalogue of printed books, manuscripts, and autograph letters, collected by Thomas J. Wise, and printed in London for private circulation, has just appeared. "The completion of the finest bibliography of modern English literature which has ever been carried out, or even projected," says Edmund Gosse, "is a matter of wide importance to the intelligent reader. . . . This is, without doubt, a record of the largest and, what is more important, the most scientifically organized collection of English *belles-lettres* which has ever been gathered by one person."

Here's to Crime!

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

SINCE the beginning of last summer I have read approximately forty-five detective stories. This, in itself, probably constitutes a major offense. The admirable introduction to Willard Huntington Wright's anthology, "The Great Detective Stories,"[1] (Take off those green whiskers, Mr. Wright, and come clean! We know you!) refers to the fascination of such fiction as being comparable with that of the printed puzzle. In many such tales there are diagrams and cryptograms —there is even so modern a development as a cross-word puzzle cryptogram in at least one recent one that I have read. Hence detective stories have attracted certain of the greatest minds of all time—mine, may I blushingly add, not figuring conspicuously among them.

But I think there is even more than that to be said. Granted that those of us who have attained to a certain modicum of comfort and ease in our present state of quasi-civilization (susceptible as this condition may be to instant disruption) exult, upon cozily and perhaps crassly cabined nights, in following in slippered ease certain rather desperate fictional affairs,—beneath the layers on layers of our own smugness and self-esteem there may lurk a piacular reason for this. The man-god receives a gift; the totem-animal (in other words, the invented villain of such literature) "atones for bloodshed within the kinship group." Or is this, perhaps, to take such fiction too seriously? Sometimes I wonder,—when I regard its wide and prosperous dissemination throughout the modern world. We demand the vicarious thrill which, in a well-oiled mechanical existence, we are far too effete to secure for ourselves through experience. The atavistic impulse easily returns. Nothing is more atavistic than the man-hunt. Mobs of individually feeble citizens are

This Week

Drawing.
By *W. A. Dwiggins.*

Quatrain.
By *William Rose Benét.*

"New York Is Not America." Reviewed by *Bernard De Voto.*

"The Changing South." Reviewed by *Donald Davidson.*

"The Classical Tradition in Poetry." Reviewed by *Paul Shorey.*

"Victor Hugo, the Man and the Poet." Reviewed by *Christian Gauss.*

"Cities and Men." Reviewed by *Chauncey B. Tinker.*

Next Week, or Later

Upton Sinclair.
By *Walter Lippmann.*

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actually, as we know, often swept into incredible excesses by it.

Yet it must be admitted that the average detective-story addict sets out to indulge in his particular mental vice with no such sadistic urge. He is often a simple soul; he is most probably a masochist. He secures pleasure from hoping to be frightened, —to have his hair stand on end. He knows he will be completely reassured either by the acumen of a master-mind or by the organized efforts of a Scotland Yard. However, perhaps, to return to Mr. Wright's pronouncement, numerous folk do approach the matter more mathematically. They merely desire to be set interesting enigmas and to sharpen their wits upon them. There are, I know well, many of these highly intellectual addicts. So well versed are some of them in the dissection of problems, so intuitive in analysis, that, nine times out of ten, they can pick their villain long before the author of the tale in hand desires them to discover him. I have one of these unerring sharp-shooters in my own family. My mind is comparatively slow, and this is therefore vastly annoying!

The prevalence of such detective intellects "shadowing" the author, following his every move with bloodhound nose to the slot, has resulted in our time in the most devious manœuvres on the writer's part to throw the reader off the scent. That eminent familiar of crime, Mr. Edmund Lester Pearson, feels (he has said so to me) that the fact that the most unlikely of all people presented in a detective story is now pretty certain to turn out in the end to be the real criminal, has strongly influenced the public mind to believe that anyone caught committing a real crime has actually not committed it at all. However that may be, the fact remains that if you see a sweet old grandmother or a perfectly innocent young lady or a young man of the most enormous rectitude hovering shyly on the verges of a tale swarming with the most brutal, degraded, and unconscionable characters, she or he is instantly suspect. Mr. Pearson mentioned a story to me, "The Mystery of Lovers' Cave," I think it was called, in which a "sweet young thing," beloved I believe by the hero of the narrative, was sternly compelled by the author to become guilty, merely to serve his own nefarious purpose of tricking the reader. In their desperation, as their audiences increase, detective story writers are being put to every possible shift and dodge. At the end of a tale of Sinclair Gluck's (which I shall refer to later) no less than four persons, in the climax, are found guilty in rapid succession of one of the crimes—the last individual being—but it is too cruel!

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Now, not to intrude myself obnoxiously, but frankly to present the attitude that I fear will govern the progress of these remarks, I may say in passing that a gentleman who meant it entirely pleasantly once introduced me at a gathering as "the poet who has never grown up." That still ruffles my feathers whenever I happen to think of it. But the same must be true of my attitude toward the theatre (for I seem to be able to sit through plays over which my contemporaries heavily groan) and the same must be true of my attitude toward the detective and the mystery story, for I have of late—alas!—even gone Edgar Wallace and Sax Rohmer!

Mr. Wright, to whose most thorough and excellent discourse upon the detective story I have already referred, draws a cogent distinction between the mystery story and the detective story. I am an admirer of both, and I may even digress into discussion of mystery stories for a paragraph or two—I give you fair warning: But the mystery story proper, according to my eminent contemporary, is that kind of tale "wherein much of the dramatic suspense is produced by hidden forces not revealed until the dénouement." Into this class fall stories of "diplomatic intrigue, international plottings, secret societies, crime, pseudo-science, and spectres." The detective story is quite different. True, the mystery story and the detective story "often overlap." They "borrow devices and appeals" from each other. They "usurp each other's distinctive material." But the chief characteristic of the detective story is that it is in the "category of riddles—the puzzle in fictional form." It is at its best when there is an entirely "realistic environment." It "must succeed by ingenuity alone."

This gives us our classification pretty clearly. But before I go any further I must, as I have hinted, help Mr. Wright to remove his green whiskers. He is, many are now thoroughly convinced, the "S. S. Van Dine," who has written "The Benson Murder Case," "The 'Canary' Murder Case," and most recently "The Greene Murder Case"[2] running serially in *Scribner's*. He is an art connoiseur, incidentally, and was editor of the *Smart Set* in its most aesthetic period. It is evident from his Introduction that he has read more detective stories than I shall ever read. His own predilections, if you are interested in internal evidence, are manifest in those of "Philo Vance," the detective of "S. S. Van Dine's" creation. He speaks with authority, both as a student and as a creator of "seventh large printings."

Mr. Wright swiftly traces for us the development of the detective story. He even refers airily to that builder of the stone treasury of the third Rameses, whose pleasurable robbery of it is retailed by Herodotus. He goes on to Poe's cryptography and scientific experimentation. He hales forth Dickens's Inspector Bucket, Wilkie Collins's Sergeant Cuff, Poe's Dupin, Gaboriau's Lecoq, and so on. I myself have always held the theory that Gaston Leroux, Maurice Leblanc, and William Le Queux were all the same person, but Wright well knows their differences, and to whom to attribute the exploits of a Rouletabille and to whom those of an Arsène Lupin. He juggles with Anna Katherine Green's Ebenezer Gryce, Freeman's Thorndyke, Arthur Morrison's Martin Hewitt. He is entirely familiar with Louis Tracy's Furneaux, Ernest Bramah's Max Carrados, and Jacques Futrelle's "The Thinking Machine." I have spent hours myself with John Buchan's Richard Hannay, with A. E. W. Mason's Hanaud, with Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot; but this man amazes me with babble of Bennett Copplestone's (and that isn't even his real name) Chief Inspector William Dawson; of Ernest M. Poates's psychopathologist, Dr. Bentiron; of Lynn Brock's Colonel Gore; of George R. Sims, James Hay Jr., and Louis Dodge.

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Enough! Enough! I am defeated before I start. He deals in such precise phrases concerning J. S. Fletcher as "fortuitous incidents" and "antiquarian researches." He has to say of Chesterton:

> The fact that *Father Brown* is concerned with the moral, or religious aspect, rather than the legal status, of the criminals he runs to earth, gives Chesterton's stories an interesting distinction.

Which may be obvious, but could not be more compactly put. And the man also arouses exorbitant curiosity in me (who have till now never heard of that author) with his reference to Arthur E. MacFarland's "Behind the Bolted Door," with its "entirely novel (so far as I know) device." At this point I am about to remark that Agatha Christie's "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" seemed to me to exploit a device also novel, when Wright halts me by dubbing it a "trick played on the reader," and "hardly legitimate." I simply cannot agree. In this one particular I immediately go to the mat with Mr. Wright. Otherwise I unreservedly recommend, to all intending students of the detective story, his condensed essay. By the time you have read all the books he mentions, you too will, presumably, have become an expert.

Thus the prologue, as usual, eats up most of the space that should have been devoted to analysis. And coinstantaneously the whim seizes me to digress briefly into a discussion of tales which are not detective stories pure and simple. For the mystery story is equally my enthusiasm. Not the mystery stories of E. Phillips Oppenheim, for whom I have the blindest of blind spots—but such mystery stories as —well, I shall merely mention them. Let me ask you, do you know May Sinclair's "The Victim," from her "Uncanny Tales," reprinted in "26 Mystery Stories Old and New by Twenty and Six Authors," edited by Ernest Rhys and C. A. Dawson Scott and published by Appleton? There's a most remarkable murder and ghost story combined. Do you know "The Barometer," by Violet Hunt, in the same volume, or "The Ghost Ship," by the late Richard Middleton? How about "Told for the Truth," the story of Hunter and his marital lemur, in Cyril Hume's volume of short stories, "Street of the Malcontents"? How about—if you really like mysteries—Edward Lucas White's "Lukundoo," with the grisly tale of the emergent minikins, and the one of the burglary of the strongly-walled estate of the enormously wealthy monstrosity in "The Snout" ? Or, for the matter of that, how about the insidious atmosphere of "The Place Called Dagon," by Herbert Gorman, or "Witch Wood," by John Buchan, the latter an historical novel centering about the furtive practice of obscene rites in a Scotch parish in the time of the great Montrose?

And more shuddery still is Francis Beeding's recent "The House of Dr. Edwardes" (Little, Brown), featuring a diabolist at large in a congeries of dangerous lunatics in the Alps. This is an excellent horror and mystery tale; one of the best of recent years.

But I must tear myself away from such phantasmagoria, and come, at long last, down to my detective stories.

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Gentlemen, and ladies, at this point I wish to inform you that I think one may fall a prey to classification. I have praised Mr. Wright for his, and yet, upon analysis, I rebel. One of the stories I am reviewing here long after its original publication (and you will find a number of last summer's books touched upon in this article, together with those of the fall and of this immediate winter) is a story of (of all places) Burma, and a story in which the innocence of the heroine, though she is sorely beset, is never in doubt from the beginning because of her own initial statement—yet, so far as literary values go it is a better novel than most of them. It does not move faster, it does not puzzle nearly so much, but the characters and the environment emerge in the round. I refer to "Green Sandals,"[3] by Cecil Champain Lowis, whose "The District Bungalow," a romance, has just lately appeared. I hate Burma, as an abstract idea. I put off reading his novel for months because it had an insipid jacket and because I thought I was going to grow apoplectic over Burma. The fact remains that the book, though in a secondary category, is satisfying. Psychology interests me more than high explosives, chemical formulæ, cryptograms, cross-word puzzles, or thumb-prints. I encountered, as I had feared, "mango," "durians," "sesamum oil," "bawarchis," "gharry," "mali," "Madrasi boy," "teak, paddy, cutch, and wolfram"—all the things that ought to remain in italics, and whose meaning you forget the subsequent instant. But in spite, rather than because of, these native details, the atmosphere began to build around one; and the characters proved human to a degree. According to Mr. Wright's formula this is a bad detective story. That may be. It is a good book, though certainly not in the first flight.

I have reviewed heretofore Frances Noyes Hart's "The Bellamy Trial."[4] Mrs. Hart reported the Hall-Mills case, I understand. Why did no one think before of making a detective story an account of the trial after the event? She brought off her cracking good idea with considerable merit in the execution. Then there is A. E. W. Mason's "No Other Tiger."[5] Mason is sufficiently an old stager. But go back to "At the Villa Rose" if you wish a thriller of the first water. His most recent is not so good as that, nor so good, in fact, as his "The House of the Arrow." But it is certainly sufficiently above the ordinary. He is a narrator born—and an exciting one—and the atmosphere of his climax in "No Other Tiger" seems to me no less than masterly.

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To digress again, I have perused such a number of yarns that in my dreams the lady with the pretty purple eyes who shot sixteen Chinamen in a junk off Singapore and escaped through the hawse-hole (if junks are so equipped) with papers of international importance, finally became inextricably entangled with the natty French master-detective who found the marks of false teeth on the secret panel behind the portrait of Sir Anthony Guffe-Goffe at Mossback Grange—until I couldn't for the life of me tell which incident occurred in "The Fangs of Fright" and which in "Oh Murder!" And my credulity has undergone such horrid strains and stresses that the poor thing is now warped out of all recognizable shape and will never again, I fear me, be the same. Nevertheless, it has been a great debauch. Sleuths and crooks of encyclopædic information, lightning intuition, herculean physical vigor (and don't forget the big mellow emotions) are entirely familiar to me now. Pretty, innocent girls (or *pretty* innocent) who get mixed up in all sorts of strenuous crimes and emerge from physical and mental tortures as dainty and as charming and as nobly loyal and as—Oh, absolutely!—unbruised as in the *status quo ante*, I simply take for normal. Master-minds that sit in remote high rooms, before diabolical inventions, plotting wholesale destruction

(*Continued on page* 610)

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Mr. Ford's New York

NEW YORK IS NOT AMERICA. By FORD MADOX FORD. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by BERNARD DE VOTO

IT appears that Mr. Ford's publishers suggested his writing a book to prove that AMERICA had assumed in the eyes of the outside world the position that Prussia had before the war. One does not quite make out whether the capitals signify the nation and symbolize the attitude toward it maintained by American literary amateurs who are dreadfully afraid that visiting foreigners may be distressed, or whether they merely express in still another way Mr. Ford's conviction that New York simply isn't. In either event, Mr. Ford, not sharing his publishers' timidity, is not alarmed. He indeed relates that the president of an inland Rotary Club threatened to send gunboats to the Seine, but confesses that he is not quite impressed. There is, probably, little hope that he will infect American publishers with his good sense.

Still, considerable gratitude is due the publishers, their apprehension having produced an urbane book about the country by a visiting English man of letters. It is the first completely good-natured one since W. L. George set out to make amends, by indiscriminate flattery, for all former condescension. But mentioning Mr. George in connection with Mr. Ford is linking Horatio Alger and Henry James.

New York is not America: that is Mr. Ford's theme. It is announced confidently in the brass and a short development in the woodwind follows, but that is all. The theme disappears and the charming conversation of a man at his ease follows. There is a vague impression, before it has quite vanished, that New York, which began as Manhattan and the Bronx, has widened to include all of the seaboard except Boston—and an appalling suggestion, even, that it takes in Chicago as well. The argument, while it lasts, is exquisite. Except, of course, the slightly credulous assumption at the basis of it, the one expressed in the title. Mr. Ford really believes what the Kansans and Oregonians of New York have told him: he really believes that a spiritual climacteric occurs when Oscar Hewitt of Peoria comes to the big time.

New Yorkers really believe it, too, and will derive satisfaction from Mr. Ford's adoption of their litany. He has done his part to support and comfort the Gotham *Minderwertigkeit*.

* * *

He too trustingly, also, accepts their observations. There is no real poverty in New York, he is sure. People in Boston are remorselessly exercised about the concept of duty and eat pie and oysters for breakfast. America, which cannot be New York, is the agrarian Middle West, and is ruled by gray-haired women who have Roman noses and wear shell-rimmed spectacles. Beacon Hill, when it is not a lesser England, is Indiana. Chicago, though it gives him sanctuary from the steppes, remains American enough to be excited by a hawk. All America is jealous of New York, is determined to dominate and subdue it, and will quite likely drive it to secession. (Just what alumnus of the Peoria High School, working on the *Graphic*, first decided that the home town boys must be jealous of him?) Chicago business men are ruthless, but those of New York only pretend to be. The *American Mercury* is anti-English and therefore pro-German. And, though the New Yorker is a cosmopolite, the American is an Irishman or a Scandinavian or a North German.

Mr. Ford depends on Oscar Hewitt for his America. Oscar talks that way a month after the climacteric. And from then on.

And this is how the Dickens of "Martin Chuzzlewit" and the Shaw of "Pygmalion" betray Mr. Ford's ears when he is listening to the vernacular: "You kehn't flirt with Amur'can gels as you ken with English ones. But if she falls in love with you, look aout."

But though Mr. Ford takes America at New York's word, his genuine love for the city itself redeems him. Mr. Irwin's little old New York, we learn, was to have been Mr. Ford's subject, as it was once his delight. He does more than well enough by its successor. He has loved and understood its energy and arrogance, its freedom, its display, even its cooking. It has vastly amused and entertained him; he enjoys it enormously and comes back to it inevitably, after absence; he can do everything but work there. So he writes of its gaieties and its conversations, its dinners and its future, its spectacle and its metaphysic. There have been few finer tributes. That he misunderstands its intermediary function in the arts is of no moment at all, since on one page he can preserve the mood of the street corner and on the next capture and hold the color of steam above the canyons or the charm of singing in a club. New York will not be offended by his discovery that it is not only the financial center of Christendom but, even now, very now, the artistic capital as well. Chicago may be offended, the expatriate New York (which he defends) certainly will be. But how, one wonders, will the city receive his announcement of its dominant characteristic? It is—hopefulness.

Mr. Ford is charming about New York; but the America which, they have told him, cannot possibly be New York, does not so much bewilder as altogether elude him. His New York is his. His America is William Hodge's.

Is an Englishman born with a conviction that Americans say "Wal"?

FRANCESCO PETRARCHA, VENICE, 1503.
From a German bookseller's catalogue.
See page 617.

The New South

THE CHANGING SOUTH. By WILLIAM J. ROBERTSON. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by DONALD DAVIDSON
Vanderbilt University

MR. ROBERTSON writes about the South very much in the manner of a genial newspaperman who has turned up a good feature story and is in a hurry to get it in type before the subject is cold. Between his awareness of the importance of the story, which certainly will bear as many tellings as it can get, and of the vast miscellaneous body of fact and fallacy to be subdued to order, he naturally finds himself sometimes in difficulty. The subject is in fact not very plastic and manageable. It is not surprising that in Mr. Robertson's interesting report on the South the wholesome truth is now and then attended by some confusion and error.

But, unlike some hasty gentlemen who have been free with their rather shallow opinions, Mr. Robertson does know his history and his politics. He understands very well that the answers to certain questions agitating the bosoms of various beholders of Southern affairs are no matter of ill-digested speculation. The answers lie in the history and tradition of the South, which was differentiated from other sections of the country in its foundation and had its differentiation strengthened, despite the triumph of national unity in government, by the Civil War and the Reconstruction. The portions of Mr. Robertson's book which discuss the political side of the Civil War, the Negro, the Ku Klux Klan, the Reconstruction, and such topics, are done without harshness or sentimentality and remind us all effectively of the salutary fact that the exciting Present is the child of a not very distant Past. The South may change, and in fact economic forces are hastening to change it; but Mr. Robertson thinks, with considerable reason, that there is no force inside or outside the South that immediately promises to destroy its deep-rooted belief in white supremacy, its political solidarity, its devotion to the old cause. On the latter item, however, I fear that Mr. Robertson is guilty of some over-emphasis. Observation of activities as diverse as financial and literary movements would tend to convince a man that the old hostility to Yankees, for instance, is far from being as operative as it used to be.

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As to the Fundamentalists, Mr. Robertson believes that the "Bible Belt" in practice cares little for the Bible. He also discovers some flavor of liberalism here and there, as indeed he ought, and thinks that manifestations of intolerance are likely to be merely manifestations of Protestantism, in the South as elsewhere. There is, however, some wavering of opinion in his discussion. Even Fundamentalism has some moral virtues, and there are all sorts of bewildering contradictions in the body politic, such as the Southern prohibitionists who vote dry and drink wet, or people of gentle manners and warm hearts who allow lynchings to proceed, though now in diminished ratio. And the further Mr. Robertson explores the contemporary field, the more confused his account becomes. His chapter on Southern literature puts the late Frank L. Stanton in fairly close proximity to James Branch Cabell and is a tangle of superficial judgments. His comments on education stray curiously between Southern provincialisms of speech and the progress of schools and colleges. There are inaccuracies, too, so grievous that one is inclined to receive with reservations various of Mr. Robertson's surveys. For example, "Peabody, of Nashville" is catalogued among the young women's colleges; but in fact George Peabody College for Teachers is thoroughly coeducational. I find also that Mr. Robertson has queer mistaken notions about Vanderbilt University and Tennessee newspapers, and am thus tempted to believe that he may be equally inaccurate in his references to other contemporary Southern institutions. These errors may be, of course, only the careless strokes all too common in journalistic writing. But they are no more admirable than Mr. Robertson's frequent lapses into pure newspaper jargon—his fondness for doubtful words like "avidious," "religionist," and "prideful," his sprinklings of "prominent," "outstanding," "ineffable," even his errors of grammar.

* * *

Finally, Mr. Robertson's book, though it is sweepingly informative on many items of Southern life and thought, does not get its facts into real unity, for the author is evidently without any definite philosophy that he can bring to bear in them. One could at times put him down as a loyal Southern "Colonel" of the old type; again he writes like a Mencken clansman or an Al Smith "Wet;" at other times he has the innocent detachment of any metropolitan critic. This shiftiness perhaps makes his general story all the more exciting; but it does not permit his book to measure up to such a well-balanced and thorough study as Edwin Mims's "The Advancing South."

For one important stand, however, Mr. Robertson deserves especial credit and support. Although on the whole fairly orthodox in his accounts of the formidable economic progress of the South (the chief fact in present Southern affairs), he is heretical enough on occasion to doubt the perfect efficacy of chambers of commerce and the reckless industrial expansion which they seem to advocate. "I may be wrong," he writes, "but I believe the chamber of commerce, in the South, particularly, has made more ineffectual noise than anything else." This, and other statements more cautiously worded, encourage us to believe that Mr. Robertson stands with that growing party which sees in the train of "progress" some dangers as intimidating as Fundamentalism; and that he, with such persons, would declare America the loser if the South, under a new commercial dispensation, should ever completely forsake the ways that have given it individuality and character.

According to a dispatch to the *Herald-Tribune* a substantial portion of the library of Isaac Newton has been discovered. Approximately two thousand volumes were found by Colonel de Villamill in a Gloucestershire manor where they have been since Newton's death.

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Hellenic Interpretation

THE CLASSICAL TRADITION IN POETRY. The Charles Eliot Norton Lectures. By GILBERT MURRAY. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by PAUL SHOREY
University of Chicago

PROFESSOR MURRAY is a poet, a dreamer, an enthusiast, a reformer, a charmer, and when he chooses, a rationalist. He paid his tribute to scholarship once for all in his Oxford text of Euripides, and he has since felt free to "let the winged fancies roam." He has given a great deal of pleasure to his many readers not excepting the present reviewer. His admirers will resent any hint of criticism as ingratitude. The fashion of modern reviewing practically exempts from censure any writer who has won his way to popular favor. Dissent, with whatever qualifications, is felt to be an expression either of a latent hostility to democracy or of envy.

And yet what are those classicists to say who sincerely believe that Professor Murray has done much harm by helping to substitute in the minds of an entire generation for Arnold's and Jebb's conception of the serene rationality of the classics the corybantic Hellenism of Miss Harrison and Isadora Duncan and Susan Glaspell and Mr. Stark Young's dithyrambic "Good Friday and Classical Professors," the higher vaudeville Hellenism of Mr. Vachel Lindsay, the anthropological Hellenism of the disciples of Sir James Fraser, the irrational, sentimental, Polynesian, free-verse and sex-freedom Hellenism of all the gushful geysers of "rapturous rubbish" about the Greek spirit? Professor Murray is not one of them, but he lends them his countenance and his name when he defines a Greek god as "the wine of the world." And it can do no harm for once to state the case of those who, since they distrust his general interpretation of the Hellenic mind, cannot be expected to accept its detailed application despite the brilliant occasional aperçus and pretty fancies that may be thought to more than redeem its aberrations.

* * *

The present book is perhaps not a fair instance. Its title called for a labor which would be distasteful to Professor Murray, and for which his many other interests seem to have left him little time. The fifteen pages of the first chapter that treat of Milton are the only part of the book that offer any definite and relevant study of the classical tradition in English literature. A simple but convincing analysis of the introduction to "Paradise Lost" clearly presents the valuable distinction between Milton's obvious and conscious classical allusions and the deeper, unconscious obedience to classical tradition. Even here there is much that is purely fanciful. The periodic structure with the long postponement of the verb in the first sentence of "Paradise Lost," "Of man's first disobedience . . . Sing, Heavenly Muse," is said to follow Vergil, Lucan, Statius, and others who take it from the Iliad and Odyssey. Surely it has been a commonplace of criticism since Arnold to contrast that sentence with Homer's direct "Menin aeide, thea," "The wrath sing, goddess." But Professor Murray cares no more than Emerson or Aristophanes or Mr. Mencken for the pertinency of the names in a list. Again speaking of Milton's "Secret top of Oreb or of Sinai" he asks, "Why 'secret'?" and answers, "Because of a tradition dating from the time when Hesiod's muses walked Mount Olympus . . . in deep mist." Not to make a point on the slip of the pen that writes Olympus for Helicon, Professor Murray must know, when he chooses to reflect, that "secret" is a mere Latinism from *secerno*, set apart, and that the mist-veiled muses can be dragged in only by a far-fetched Freudian association that would find anything in anything. So again Milton's "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth," has nothing to do with the *Keres*, or dooms of black death, that beset men in Sarpedon's speech in the twelfth Iliad, which, by the way, Professor Murray in another book interprets differently for another purpose. The parallel, if any parallel is needed, is to be found in Odyssey 17, 485-7: "Yea, the gods in the likeness of strangers from other lands, assuming what shapes they please, roam through cities taking note of the insolence of men or their lawful spirit."

In any case Professor Murray soon tires of this sort of thing or his material runs out. And an ingenious transition enables him to turn away from it to that curious blend of the prehistoric, the sentimental-romantic, and the ultra-modern, which, in common with so many modern readers, he prefers. To distinguish, he says, the alien and extraneous aspects of classicism in English poetry from those which are the direct though unconscious inheritance of ancient tradition, we must try to "discover the origin of poetry, the style and spirit that originally made poetry and that constitute its classical or perhistoric with the classical tradition. But it promanent tradition." This of course begs the whole question by identifying the primitive and the prevides a facile transition to Miss Harrison, and Mr. Cornford, and Mr. J. A. K. Thompson, and Sir James Frazer, and Mr. Lawson's modern Greek folk-lore, and the *Molpe* or dance-and-song, and the "yearning of the whole dumb body to express emotion," and the Mummers' plays and *Methexis* and ecstasy, and the Year-Demon or vegetation god, and the original magic purpose of the drama, and *katharsis* as Freudian release, with occasional side-glances at realism, Ibsen, and Mr. Bernard Shaw—all more interesting than Greek and English literature to readers who do not really care for literature.

* * *

The habit or gift of fantastic and unexpected association of ideas makes a popular after-dinner speaker or a delightful conversationalist, and adds a charm of surprise or sentiment to prose style. But a critic and scholar must keep it under severe control. No logical scruples inhibit the flight of ideas in Professor Murray's associations. The fact or conjecture, sufficiently recognized in a page of Plato's Laws, that art began with communal dance and song, becomes for him a generalized, personified, and capitalized *Molpe*, not cribbed or confined by time or space and independent of petty chronological considerations which, as he truly says, we can with difficulty imagine. If we seek in imagination to reconstruct this ancient *Molpe*, Chapter IV begins. What ancient *Molpe*? we ask, Pindar or the "song-and-dance" of the Konroi about the cradle of Zeus?

"The bard," says Professor Murray, "felt that they were like birds on the wing." "Hesiod says that the muses are free from care." "*That explains* [italics mine] the cry of Alcman," "Would that I were the ceryl bird, who over the flower of the wave floats among the halcyons with never a care in his heart." "The ceryl bird conducts a *Molpe* too, like the poet, except that the bird never wearies." This beats the Freudians at their own game. The lovely lines of Alcman addressed to his chorus of maiden pupils compare the old poet to the ceryl or male halcyon, which, the legend said, when old and weary was supported in its flight by the female.

> Oh, maidens, with voices of yearning plaint
> In honey-sweet accents heard,
> The limbs upbearing your minstrel faint;
> Ah, would I might be as the bird,
> The bird that flits o'er the foaming wave
> Upheld by its mistress' wing,
> Still keeping a careless heart and brave,
> The sea-blue bird of the spring.

The bird does weary, you see, but is upborne by the female's wings. That is Alcman's point. But Professor Murray doesn't really care for Alcman's point or the point of any other Greek writer whom he interprets; he cares only for the point which he himself wishes to make, and which he is able to make more interesting to his readers than the truth. Thus he returns to this fancy in an eloquent passage at the end of this chapter, which I quote in justice to Professor Murray and for the pleasure of readers who will take it as a conclusive answer to my pedantic cavils:

> Love, Strife, Death, and that which is beyond Death; an atmosphere formed by the worship of Nature and the enchantment of Memory; a combination of dance and song like the sweep of a great singing bird; all working toward an ecstasy, or a transcending of personality, a "standing outside" of the prison of the material present, to be merged in some life that is the object of adoration or desire: these seem to be the subjects, and this the spirit and setting, of that primitive *Molpe* which is the fountainhead of ancient classical poetry. The tradition, if there is a tradition, rises there. It can be traced in later Greek literature, and through Greek into Latin, and on into the higher style of verse in medieval and modern Europe, a thing permanent amid changes innumerable, creating still, as it created many thousand years ago, the indefinable result that we call poetry.

The *Molpe* is followed by a long and quite technical, but not always quite critical, chapter on metre which illustrates again the surprising fact that audiences will endure and publishers print anything about ancient metres except the simple truth. There is no mystery about Greek metres, and the measures of the Greek poets differ from good English verse only in that the character of the language and the fact that the Greeks did not try to preserve the prose stresses of words enable them to keep their quantities truer than any English poets can except Swinburne and Shelley at their best. A teacher who knows his subject can teach the upper half of any American class to read Greek lyrics tolerably and a chosen few to read them quite acceptably. But it is more interesting to talk mystically and sentimentally of the *Molpe*, and the cadences and the greater nearness of ancient metre to the dance, or pseudo-scientifically of the kymographic record and the pulse-beat of the poet, or scholastically of "Reizianum, praxillion, anaclastic dochmiacs, enoplion, encomiologicus."

The following chapter on poetic diction repeats with finely chosen illustrations many sensible commonplaces but adds little to previous discussions of Wordworth's Preface and Coleridge's comment. Much the same is to be said of the chapter on unity and construction which finally loses itself in a rather technical discussion of the order of words and the well-worn topic of the effects possible in an inflected language and irreproducible in English. A chapter on the heroic age suggested by Chadwick's book is next inserted. It is followed by a reprint of a British Academy paper on Hamlet and Orestes. The book concludes with a suggestive chapter on poetry—what poetry is. After casually dismissing Croce's thesis that it is only expression, and all other metaphysical theories, Professor Murray asks, "Is poetry an illusion or a reality?" It is a kind of pretense, he admits, after Shakespeare. But it is also creation, and it is, as Shelley said, the opposite of egotism. It is further, in Professor Murray's own experience, *mimesis* or imitation, and *methexis* or communion. When he translates a chorus of Euripides he would feel hurt and surprised, "if anyone told me I had not myself written it"—he usually has. Lastly poetry is, as Keats, Shelley, and the romanticists generally proclaim, a revelation of truth—not general, abstract, philosophic, or scientific truth, Professor Murray sensibly reminds us, but the truth of contact with reality in the form of intense experience. In the other arts we recognize this. But because poetry employs words and words form propositions we look for objective truth in its words when all that matters is that they should express well a feeling that we wish to have expressed. The rationalist, who is yoked with the poet in Professor Murray, qualifies possible exaggerations of this principle, takes refuge in the Greek identification of the moral and the esthetic in the *kalon*, and concludes with an eloquent appeal for the preservation of the true in distinction from the false classicism and for the maintenance of the tradition of the best as opposed to supine contentment with second and third rate substitutes in life, literature, and the reading that makes so much of our true life.

Announcement is made by Doubleday, Doran & Company of a new prize contest in the field of detective and mystery stories to be known as the Scotland Yard Prize. This is a prize of $2,500 to be given by Doubleday, Doran & Company as a prize over and above all book royalties which may accrue, for the best mystery and detective story to be submitted in this contest. The rules of the competition shall be as follows: The contest is open to all writers, professional or amateur, of whatever nationality although manuscripts must be submitted in English. The length of the manuscript must be from 75,000 to 100,000 words.

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A Spacious World

IRON AND SMOKE. By SHEILA KAYE-SMITH. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1928. $2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

THIS *is a grown-up novel. It has none of* the lusty incompetence and shrill incompleteness of youth. Instead, with pattern and purpose firmly in hand, it spans a long period of time and a large stretch of space, sure in its workmanship, urbane and mellow in its point of view.

The irreconcilable divergence between those who live upon the land and those who live by burrowing under it, between the old aristocracy of great estates and the new industrialism of coal and iron, between the sunny fields of southern England and the murky cities of the north, this forms the central theme of the novel. But the theme is made vital by being intertwined with the story of the Bastows and the Mallards.

When Sir Humphrey Mallard, faced with the choice between his love and his land, chose the latter and married money in the person of Jenny Bastow, an ironmaster's daughter, he wittingly provided for his property, but all unwittingly provided for an heir who could never understand his sacrifice. Strangely enough, after Sir Humphrey died and deserted his land as well as his mistress, it was his romantic little fool of a wife, foreign as she was to all the traditions of the Mallards, who nevertheless preserved his great estate for his son. The story of all this and of how Jenny's jealousy of Isabel, her husband's ancient mistress, was transformed into an unconventional friendship, and of how the various feelings of these two women affected the lives of their children carries us from the days of ballooning sleeves and the first motors, through the war and its afterings, into the new industrialized England and the new outspoken younger generation of the present day. We leave Jenny at the end, her soft gray hair recently bobbed, welcoming her baby grandson, the future squire of all the Mallard properties. But, by the irony of change, at the very moment of his birth and to the exultant satisfaction of his father, those fruitful acres, for which Jenny and Humphrey had both made so many sacrifices, were being bored and pitted for the extraction of coal.

* * *

The more one regards this novel from the vantage point of its spaciousness, the more one admires it. The contrasts between the existence and ideals of the older Mallards and the older Bastows would have provided enough color and variety for many a less ambitious novelist. But here we have these contrasts lightly thrown to us in passing and then caught back again to be tossed our way once more in their modern juggled forms: Jenny with her acquired love of the land, Timothy and Wing with their new types of radicalism, Aubrey, the squire turned industrialist. And behind all the changes wrought upon these human beings we watch the changes taking place in their environment. Miss Kaye-Smith is especially skilled in keeping such minor properties as houses, rooms, clothes, and modes of conveyance back stage and yet extracting from them the contributory effects she wishes to convey. Moreover her understanding of the relations between the several generations that enter her story and her balanced sympathy as it shifts from old to new and back again, as well as from one *milieu* to another, keep the novel poised upon an even keel. At all times indeed it sails along smoothly and graciously, directed by a delicate but practiced hand.

It is when one examines more closely the protagonists of the tale that disappointment makes itself felt. Obviously this is not a novel "of character." Only a tenuous interest can attach to a heroine of so frail an essence as Jenny, real as she is; Humphrey hardly comes to life before his death; and Isabel, who at first promised more in the matter of personality than either of the others, breaks that promise. She and Jenny with their merged philosophy of seeking solace in little things remain little people. Their problems are perforce a matter of slight consequence. The other persons in the story fill only minor rôles and some of them who have decided substance—like Timothy, Wing, Mrs. Bastow, Henry and Anna Luck—unfortunately appear upon the scene too seldom or too late to be of more than passing concern to us.

Yet the novel attempts so much—too much, perhaps—and in most of that attempt is so successful that one hesitates to ask for more. If the persons are small and spiritually circumscribed, the world in which they move is spacious. Indeed it is in some measure the disproportionate perspectives of time and environment against which we watch them moving that dwarf their stature.

Mysticism and Fiction

THE EXILE. By MARY JOHNSTON. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co. 1927. $2.50

THE HOUSE OF FULFILMENT. By L. ADAMS BECK. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 1927. $2.50.

HINDU MYSTICISM. By S. DASGUPTA. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

MYSTICISM is a treacherous friend to the artist. A dash of it is invaluable; a plunge into it is fatal. Without some touch of it, some sense of the nothingness of life, the vanity of appearances, some feeling for a reality behind time and space and the sensuous mirage, the artist lags in a dull realism or smug rationalism. Almost all the British poets have had traces of mysticism in their make-up; perhaps what seems to us their superiority to the French is mainly due to this element. But let mysticism, this inspiring friend, become the captain of one's soul, the artist is disabled. The field of art lies in the very world of appearances whose reality the mystic denies. Take away the artist's sight and sounds and scents, his adventures among things and people, and you have taken the prop that sustains his whole house. Furthermore, mystics, much rather than poets, are born and not made. The artist who deliberately coquets with mysticism is probably flaunting colors not his own. For this reason writers of fiction, a more deliberate art than poetry, have usually made a mess of mysticism when they dabbled in it. Balzac, no, because Balzac could partake of any thing once when he fully made up his mind to it; but Balzac's "Seraphita" is not the type ; rather such works as Bulwer Lytton's "Zanoni," George Sand's "Countess of Rudolstadt," Arnold's "Phra the Phœnician," Mme. Blavatsky's "Nightmare Tales," or the laborious Cagliostro episodes of the elder Dumas—mediocre mysticism and still more mediocre art—mediocre in each case because inconsistent and insincere.

Two recent novels by highly competent writers, one of them indeed much more than competent, well exemplify this danger. In "The Exile" Mary Johnston forsakes the well-trodden Shenandoah valley for an uncharted island in the Atlantic. Hither in some dim future era of dictators, not so unlike the present, is exiled a political liberal, Richard Kaye, condemned for the deeds of more radical associates. The story thus begins in a realm of facts only too familiar, but when it moves to the island it enters a region of glamour and mystery. Eldorado Island, isolated from the world, has bred a whole introverted community, nourished on legends and old superstitions, haunted by the memory of the political prisoners who have died there. Its intimate topography, its gray lonely atmosphere, its barren shores washed by illimitable seas, have a dream-like fascination for the reader. But in proportion as this shadow-land becomes imaginatively real, the characters fade away. They all speak in a vague, oracular, portentous manner, uttering commonplaces with the gravity of sages. The sense of the underlying unity of all human lives, at times finely rendered by Miss Johnston, too often sinks into a wearisome iteration and reiteration of a consciousness of pre-existence. There is a breathless messianic expectancy hardly vindicated by the ending—a convenient political revolution at home which recalls Richard Kaye to his native shores in triumph. Miss Johnston's mysticism is sufficient to injure her book as a work of art, insufficient to raise it to the level of religious aspiration which it seeks. Her renunciation of the world is too much and not enough. Yet the austerity of true religion is present in intention if not in execution; the love *motif*, inevitable in fiction, is duly subordinate; Richard Kaye returns to his home at least enough of a mystic to trail no bride in his wake.

"The House of Fulfilment," by L. Adams Beck (E. Barrington), moves on the much lower plane where mysticism merges into magic. Its scene is laid in the high Himalayas loved of rishis, lamas, and mahatmas. Here Thibetan monks read fortunes, foretell the future, indulge in telepathy, leave their bodies in sleep, and live for centuries. Here the first-person story-teller, a straw skeptic in whose mouth are put the necessary infantile questions and idiotic replies, is converted to the faith and rewarded with the hand of an Orpheus-like heroine whose singing brings birds, beasts, and men to her feet. Even Mrs. Beck's narrative skill cannot move these puppet-characters except in jerks. The whole thing is a kind of spiritual picnic in the mountains.

From this pseudo-mysticism, which seems to be a not unusual reaction of the occidental mind to orientalism, it is pleasant to turn to an account of Hindu mysticism written by a Hindu. S. Dasgupta, professor in the University of Calcutta, one of the ablest delegates to the Philosophical Congress at Harvard in 1926, and author of "A History of Indian Philosophy" and "Yoga as Philosophy and Religion," is probably as well qualified to deal with this subject as is anyone now living. His "Hindu Mysticism," sixteen lectures delivered at Northwestern University in 1926, traces the development of this phase of Indian thought from the magic of the Vedas, through the Upanishads, the Yoga of Patanjali, various forms of Buddhism, the rise of Bhakti (emphasis on love), on down through the little-known mystics of the seventeenth century. It is an admirable book. Here one gets the real thing instead of fictional distortions of it. And the real thing, as Professor Dasgupta shows abundantly, is an ineffable sense of ultimate Being, a sense of a Self that is the reality behind appearances, in comparison with which no appearances can have more than infinitesimal value. To live constantly in this experience is the natural goal of mysticism, and to it the thorough-going mystic will sacrifice all earthly ties, all other desires, and even intellect itself. To a normal occidental mind this price will seem too high. Yet the mystic asserts that it is not, and who else can evaluate his experience for him? However that may be, one thing is clear: he who follows the mystic way must sooner or later cast off art along with science and tread a lonely path unaccompanied by any of "those things of beauty which the stars enshrine."

In the Steel Mills

BREAD AND FIRE. By CHARLES RUMFORD WALKER. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT B. MACDOUGALL

THIS first novel by Charles Rumford Walker is not pleasant reading, but it has the ring of truth and the disciplined passion of an intelligent hater. We see industrialism take a man who is young and enthusiastic and full of a lusty desire for life, dangle him for a few years between heaven and hell, and then send him out into the world at twenty-five—a bum. Mr. Walker knows what he is talking about when he discusses the steel and copper mills. He worked in them for several years after the war; he mixed with their hunkies, lived in their dangers and their stupefying fatigues until he no longer was an outsider looking on. His first literary response to his experiences was a series of magazine articles in 1922. Now comes his novel, and an unusually bitter one it is. But more important than its bitterness are its sincerity and its power.

There is no explicit resentment, no obvious rebellion, in "Bread and Fire." Mr. Walker merely notes what happened to the lad who tells the story of the two critical years of his life. Resenting his New England heritage, this Burnham has sweated in the steel mills of Pittsburgh for long months before he gives them up to become the sub-editor of a radical weekly. The sheet and its backers give him acute nausea after a little while, and then he tries his hand at copper, working as a "sticker" in a huge mill. Through all these differing environments he has been driven by a consuming curiosity that forces him to probe—deeper and deeper always—into industrialism, the problems of its hunkies, and the possible satisfactions that it may ultimately bring to his own soul. He never gets anywhere in his spiritual struggles except hopelessly into a bog of vague, uncomprehending misery. At the end of the novel he has been forced to give up almost everything that we who read hold dear, but yet he somehow manages to hold his head tragically high. Fundamentally he is beaten; the vast machinery has

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crushed the real man. Still, in his greatest misery, he never bleats of capitalism, or wage-slaves, or revolution. The actuality is too intense to permit theories. For that very reason, this novel that is his history becomes powerful in its indictment of the system that necessitates the sacrifice of such a man.

We resent a tendency to baldness in Mr. Walker's style, and we wish that he had chosen to give his novel more movement. Undeniably the unfolding tragedy is a little slow and monotonous. But there is much to praise in "Bread and Fire," as well as much to make us vastly uncomfortable. The book's chief asset, its surface dispassionateness, allows it to be as palatable to the readers of *The Nation* as to the readers of the Boston *Evening Transcript*. Neither group will be offended. Mr. Walker may well feel that he has rendered his cause a service, and that at the same time he has written a novel of distinct merit.

O'Neil's Achievement

THE WHITE ROOSTER AND OTHER POEMS. By George O'Neil. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927.

ANY casual mention of an O'Neil is taken as a reference to Eugene O'Neill, America's most brilliant and most uneven playwright. There is, however, another O'Neil (minus one "l") in the field of letters, a younger man who suddenly, in one stride as it were, has stepped into the front rank of the younger poets. This review of "The White Rooster" comes regrettably late, but since its publication the book has been read and reread with increasing pleasure by this commentator. The felicity of George O'Neil's phrase is most unusual, his technique is now entirely mature, the poems here assembled are the true gold. He has learned well that

> Beauty's a charger vaulting up a void
> With veins all checked in rigid spasm.
> He hears no timid foal, with entrails cloyed,
> Neigh in the flowery chasm.

In other words, his muse has knit up its sinews; and if sometimes O'Neil's floriate decoration has a touch too much of the metallic or seems too brittle, we may at least marvel at the infinitely dexterous interplay of words. But there is really far more than this; there is a fierce zest for life almost cruel. The first verse of the poem called "Snake," for instance, rivets one's attention with the art of its language, but the last verse ripples the spine. In "Fable," the unicorn's hoof, haunch, and head that

> swung down into a glassy heap
> And smashed it with a sideward sweep

brings the frost fume of actual winter into one's throat, and, magical as are, in "Inlander," the lines of description,

> Her hair hung down all willow-wise
> And shook a golden sleet

it is in the intense expression of foreboding in the last verse that the salient power of the poem resides.

"Garden Incident" we have heard read with keen delight by no less a poet than Edna St. Vincent Millay, and particularly remember how her voice lingered on the lines

> The hound that runs alone
> Has turned himself to stone.
> The urns upon the wall
> That let the water fall
> Have whispered, dripped, desisted.
> The basin that was wide
> Has narrowed on a side,
> The marble edge has twisted.

When O'Neil observes natural things his precision of description is sometimes amazing. Who can forget his "railing" locust, or the crow that "cried apprehension down his wing"? His "Ode to a Frog" in which he ejaculates, "Green little ogre in the poisoned stream," and speaks of "this little sluggard's bellows" also strikes out "the quivering distraction of a star." He sees a tortoise move "up copper sands . . . an onyx cluster." He knows

> The way a fragile birch went up and broke
> Into a snare of iridescent smoke,

sees "free brown rabbits sitting cautiously," dreams in a bus of a fisherman by "the bright Ligurian sea" till

> down the fellow's thighs, all wet,
> The morning glued a golden vine.

These expressions rise from him continually and spontaneously. He conjures with phrase. He vividly evokes actuality. The musical movement of his verse, in its delicate arrangement of syllables, shows him a fine lyrist. The improvement over former work of his own is almost startling. In fact, "The White Rooster" is brilliant performance, where there was always promise.

Here's to Crime

(*Continued from page* 606)

to entire populations, seem natural enough little varmints. Super-detectives—well, the same. But every addict develops certain prejudices. The delicate art of forgery still leaves me cold. "A gang of international crooks" arouses faint nausea. How I abhor hidden wills! Barratry or arson I should not seek of my own accord. No, not even—take it away, my dear,—burglary. I WANT MURDER! It is Mr. Wright's conclusion also. For he thinks it not only the most serious crime but the most absorbing public topic, "something commensurate with the amount of mental energy which a good detective novel compels (one) to expend." Wright is right. and that's all there is to it!

We return to where we were before we were so rudely interrupted. I shall refer to all my favorites. First, next to those I have mentioned, Austin J Small. What does it signify, the impossible feat of Kellard Maine's escape from the villain Vorst's under-river cellar in "The Death Maker"? Both this story and "The Man They Couldn't Arrest"[6] attain such a pace and such a pitch of excitement that one hurdles lightly over such matters. It is the same with the preposterous "crashing" of the airplane into "The Pretty Ann" at the end of Edgar Wallace's "The Traitors' Gate," flinging out both fliers unhurt and full of beans into the aftermath of the bloody fracas abroad ship. These are flaws, bad flaws. But, at his best, in each work, the writer has commandeered three virtues: speed, atmosphere, clarity.

* * *

Austin J. Small and Edgar Wallace are both possessed of hectic, small-boyish invention. Small is the more ingenious, Wallace the more atmospheric. They are super-dime novelists and extremely good of their kind.

I like desperate figures flitting the desolate downs through resonant thunderstorms. I like pea-soup fogs on London, and, as Chesterton puts it "the finding of a foe." I like the extraordinary amount of whisky and soda that English writers make their male characters consume in the course of a breathless chase. In fact, it sometimes seems to me a mortal wonder that anyone keeps on searching at all with that fascinating "tantalus" forever at their elbow! I like Scotland Yard. Let me burst into song and declaim that—the C. I. D. means more to me than the whole old Homicide Bureau. But then, that's prejudice. The prejudice of the addict. I inherited it from another addict who can never possibly bear any detective story without an English *locale*.

This darned article is just all messed up with digressions. Where was I? Not back in the days of the old *Strand Magazine*? No, no; I was coming down to R. Austin Freeman. And what a man! You can have your J. S. Fletcher with his four books, at a minimum, per year. To me he is writing himself out. You can even have Sherlock Holmes with his Case Book, by this time; "We are not once the strength that in old days—!" Yes, you may even have "Father Brown," in whom I have often taken vast delight. But give me, oh give me, and how I wish you would, the forthcoming "A Certain Dr. Thorndyke."[7] And read Freeman's latest before that; "The Cat's Eye,"[8] and his collected short stories. Yet better still go back and read "The Singing Bone." Thorndyke is, again according to Wright (who is always popping up), "the purely scientific detective"—and just contrast him with Arthur B. Reeve's "Craig Kennedy," pseudo-scientist! Convincing detail versus flagrant concoction.

I have no space here to mention my vastly-admired Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. So I shall. One of the primer lessons in detective and mystery story reading would be the prescription of "The Chink in the Armour" and "The Lodger," for all earnest neophytes. And by the end of next month you will be able to read her "The Story of Ivy." Then there is H. C. Bailey's Reggie Fortune ("Mr. Fortune, Please!"[9]), also ranking "A" and (pardon me, Mr. Wright, but I have been giving you a lot of publicity!) so far superior to the affected "Philo Vance." And then there is—well, the late Isabel Ostrander, so good in her time, and (to my mind) so far excelling the classic Anna Katharine Green. But, though Isabel wrote under several names, and in reams, I haven't read anything posthumous of hers in the past year. Who else? A good many newcomers. Henry Wade is not a newcomer. Wright knows about him, and "The Verdict of You all"[10] has been out in England for some time, though now first published here. It is a tale with a sardonic sting. "Interference,"[11] by Roland Pertwee, is from a play that made a great hit in London and still runs at the Lyceum in New York. Pertwee has made a rattling good novel of it. There is "The Vanishing Men,"[12] by G. McLeod Winsor, and "The Last Trap,"[13] by Sinclair Gluck, and "The Professor's Poison,"[14] by Neil Gordon. The first exploits a new scientific discovery called "levium," a form of matter with which all of us were hitherto unfamiliar—which rather begs the question. Yet the story has thrills. The second has such a "button, button, who's got the button" ending that it makes you wish to cry "Fraud!", especially as the final culprit proves to be a poor unsuspecting China-boy who hasn't really figured in the story at all. And yet the author displays unusual invention and agility. The third is chiefly remarkable for a peculiar character with a decidedly humorous aspect, and for a strikingly original conception that, after much breath-taking, resolves itself into a rather long-drawn-out stern chase and climax at Geneva in close conjunction with the League of Nations. Yet Stein's last card is not badly played.

* * *

So I exhaust my first choices, and now I can merely append a summary. Here is my winnowing. It is governed by my own prejudices, naturally. I have read, among some good ones, some extremely poor stories. Of these I must, in all honesty, list "The Return of Blackshirt," by Bruce Graeme (Dodd, Mead), "Findings Is Keepings," by John Boyd Clarke (Clode) and "By Night," by Robert Clay (Lippincott). They are pretty terrible. "Find the Clock," by Harry Stephen Keeler (Dutton), is not quite so bad, and the author knows newspaper offices; but it is bad enough at that. If we come down to publishers, the present firm of Doubleday, Doran seems to deserve precedence. Dodd, Mead would rank next. Alfred A. Knopf has the most Fletcher titles. Dutton, besides H. C. Bailey, promises new work by Walter S. Masterman, in '2 L O," Ben Ames Williams in "The Dreadful Night," Keeler again, and Clement Wood in "The Shadow from the Bogue." Macmillan has Eden Phillpotts, Harrington Hext, (is he Phillpotts also?) and Joseph Gollomb. Stokes promises a new murder mystery by a writer called "Molly Thynne." Harpers is playing a "stunt" with their new "The Old Dark House," by the highly intelligent J. B. Priestley. Dodd, Mead, again, is about to exploit John Rhode's "Dr. Priestly," (not at all the same man!). Lincoln MacVeagh, of the Dial Press, has had an Edgar Wallace, a Bertram Atkey, and an Anthony Gilbert, among others. And so, dear readers, on another page of this issue, in more succinct form, you will find all that I otherwise have to say.

* * *

RECOMMENDED WITH FEW RESERVATIONS

[1]THE GREAT DETECTIVE STORIES (For the Introduction). *Willard Huntington Wright.* Scribners.

[2]THE GREENE MURDER CASE (as it promises). *S. S. Van Dine.* Scribners.

[3]GREEN SANDALS. *Cecil Champain Lowis.* Doubleday, Doran.

[4]THE BELLAMY TRIAL. *Frances Noyes Hart.* Doubleday, Doran.

[5]NO OTHER TIGER. *A. E. W. Mason.* Doubleday, Doran.

[6]THE MAN THEY COULDN'T ARREST. *Austin J. Small.* Doubleday, Doran.

[7]A CERTAIN DR. THORNDYKE (sight unseen). *R. Austin Freeman.* Dodd, Mead.

[8]THE CAT'S EYE. *R. Austin Freeman.* Dodd, Mead.

[9]MR. FORTUNE, PLEASE! *H. C. Bailey.* Dutton.

[10]THE VERDICT OF YOU ALL. *Henry Wade.* Payson & Clark.

[11]INTERFERENCE. *Roland Pertwee.* Houghton Mifflin.

[12]THE VANISHING MEN. *G. McLeod Winsor.* William Morrow, Inc.

[13]THE LAST TRAP. *Sinclair Gluck.* Dodd, Mead.

[14]THE PROFESSOR'S POISON. *Neil Gordon.* Harcourt, Brace.

THE HOUSE OF DR. EDWARDES. (More strictly a mystery and horror story. But you should not miss it.) *Francis Beeding.* Little, Brown.

(*Continued on page* 618)

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The Play of the Week

By Oliver M. Sayler

THE BRIDAL VEIL, a Pantomime-Ballet in Three Acts. By Arthur Schnitzler, with Music by Ernst von Dohnanyi. Produced by Elizabeth Anderson-Ivantsoff for the American Laboratory Theatre, 222 East Fifty-Fourth Street, New York, January 26, 1928.

Reviewed from Performance and Manuscript

LAST fall when I began this series of criticisms of contemporary plays in the light of their literary values as qualified by purely theatrical expedients and transmuted thereby into an independent art which is not merely literature, but inevitably related to it, I filed a claim for ballet as innate if remote participant in this esthetic process. The word, it seemed to me, has a vital, essential, and more or less significant function to perform in ballet, the word as concrete conceptual idiom as contrasted with form, color, sound, or movement in the abstract. The word is necessary, in the first place, purely as a mechanical medium of exchange to convey the thought and purpose of the author to the performer. Only an author who could turn ballet regisseur and illustrate in person the workings of his creative imagination could dispense with it. The word, in the second place, is eminently desirable, if not strictly necessary, to insure comprehension of the author's idea on the part of the audience. In this sense, the word becomes interpretation, "program," in contrast to the word as mechanism, and hence partakes more obviously of, and lends itself more freely to, literature.

To illustrate and point these general reflections concerning the word-bridge between ballet, pantomime, or other forms of wordless drama and the literary art, the American Laboratory Theatre has conveniently produced in its new home in East Fifty-Fourth Street, as the third item in its third season, Arthur Schnitzler's pantomime-ballet, "The Bridal Veil" ("The Veil of Pierrette") with the original score by Ernst von Dohnanyi, for many years a favorite in European repertories and the first notable production of the now-celebrated Kamerny Theatre in Moscow.

* * *

I hope that no one who values a brave and intelligent experimental spirit or who prizes an unusual and sensuously exhilarating evening in the theatre regardless of experiment, will be swerved from attendance by what I have to say in regard to the literary shortcomings and neglected opportunities of "The Bridal Veil." That aspect of ballet, after all, though it is an integral part of the subject and the one chiefly pertinent to this series of criticisms, is subsidiary in general importance to the direct appeal to the senses and emotions through the other abstract and non-literary media of the art.

On these general scores, there can be little but gratitude and praise for the Laboratory's achievement. Elizabeth Anderson-Ivantsoff, bringing to her task the skill of one of Moscow's most highly regarded prima ballerinas and a pliant and evocative pedagogic talent, has fired a group of young American dancers with individual insight into and mastery of their rôles and with an ease of ensemble playing that insures a continuity of action steadily alive and plastic. There is vigor here where vigor is demanded, tragedy that cuts clean and avoids melodrama, and a lyric atmosphere over all which is never permitted to become mawkish or prettily sentimental. Schnitzler's simple retelling of the legend of Pierrot, Pierrette, and the Bridegroom, and von Dohnanyi's score are fused by the choreography. This wedding of two arts to make a third is blessed and perfected by James Reynolds's boldly original and exotic but strangely blending costumes which flash against his happily conceived settings. On the score of performance, I could wish only that a string quartet had replaced a single piano to give rhythmic and tonal variety and the strangely vibrant and dramatic quality of that musical medium.

Literary negligence in the American version of "The Bridal Veil" is excusable and harmless on the first count of the word in ballet. Schnitzler, it is true, provided in the original German text a running commentary on the action in succinct, workmanlike form which, nevertheless, has literary dignity and variety if not reading value. He even indicates snatches of speech corresponding to the action, a phrase or a remark which he expects to be translated from dialogue into plastic expression, gesture or movement. The prompt book or scenario, as it were, of the American version, which, by the way, has been freely adapted by Mme. Anderson, came into existence after the fact and then only in the baldest and most technical of stage directions. But the case differs. Mme. Anderson embodied her conceptions in person without the need of a word link, whereas Schnitzler had to work through a second party as regisseur.

It is on the second count of the word in ballet—its function as interpretation, as "program"—that I feel the Laboratory Theatre has been remiss. How much more effective, how much more emotionally satisfying, the production would be with such an inspired and inspiring poetic résumé of the action, we can only surmise. The old classic ballet, of course, could afford to ignore this literary legend. Absolute dancing—the pas seul, the pas de deux, the entire corps—has no story. It is esthetically pleasing only in the most abstract sense. It can mean to the spectator anything which he brings to it at the moment. Even a title is gratuitous. But when the pantomime-ballet, the dance-drama, the ballet with a story, emerged, it brought with it the opportunity if not the necessity for the word, for a literary résumé. In this sense, the pantomime-ballet corresponds to program music. The practitioners of the latter frequently find inspiration in an already created work of literature—a poem or a passage of descriptive or narrative prose. If the process is reversed, they are usually careful to provide the interpretive "program" in a form worthy of their own musical contribution. Such a "program" is lacking in "The Bridal Veil." A single inept and banal paragraph attempts lamely to do duty for it. It is not too late to fill this gap in an otherwise exquisite contribution to the season's theatrical record. But it must be filled by a poet or a master of lyric prose worthy of the collaborating author, composer, regisseur, and designer.

I have said that the pantomime-ballet brought with it the opportunity or the necessity for the word. I have purposely phrased the case thus alternatively. For I recognize the legitimacy of the contention of the newer school of dance-dramatists that the pantomime-ballet can and should be so self-evident in its meaning as to need no interpretation—a kind of motion picture without sub-titles. I venture to doubt, however, whether any but connoisseurs of the art can ever successfully waive this literary key. And even were it possible to do so, an appropriate "program" should be a pleasant and unobtrusive grace note or l'envoi.

* * *

PLAYS OF THE SEASON
Still Running in New York

BURLESQUE. By *Arthur Hopkins* and *George Manker Watters*. Plymouth Theatre. The personal equation beneath pink tights and putty nose.

THE GOOD HOPE. By *Herman Heijermans*. Civic Repertory Theatre. A European repertory veteran ably revived on our only repertory stage.

PORGY. By *Dorothy* and *DuBose Heywood*. Republic Theatre. The rhythms of negro life interpreted in pulsing drama.

ESCAPE. By *John Galsworthy*. Booth Theatre. Leslie Howard *et al.* in the dramatist's latest—and last—play.

THE IVORY DOOR. By *A. A. Milne*. Charles Hopkins Theatre. An ironic and whimsical fairy tale for grown-ups.

AND SO TO BED. By *J. B. Fagan*. Bijou Theatre. A satiric and pungent comedy based on a presumable day in the amorous life of Samuel Pepys, Esq.

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA. By *Bernard Shaw*. Guild Theatre. A debated and debating play set squarely on its feet at last by sound acting and discerning direction.

THE PLOUGH AND THE STARS. By *Sean O'Casey*. Hudson Theatre. The Irish Players lift the curtain on a Dublin tenement under the rebellion.

PARIS BOUND. By *Philip Barry*. Music Box. A young American playwright comes into his own with a triumph of the casual.

THE ROYAL FAMILY. By *George S. Kaufman* and *Edna Ferber*. Selwyn Theatre. A wise, witty, and tender comedy of the actor at home—back of "back stage."

MARCO MILLIONS. By *Eugene O'Neill*. Guild Theatre, alternate weeks with "The Doctor's Dilemma." Venice's star travelling salesman is counting his profits when Romance knocks at the door.

STRANGE INTERLUDE. By *Eugene O'Neill*. John Golden Theatre. The Theatre Guild as experimental laboratory for O'Neill's newest, longest, most original, and most provocative play.

Three years of effort by the directors of the Newberry Library to acquire for Chicago the famous Biblioteca Canale of Crespano—more than twenty thousand volumes on the Italian art, literature, music and history of the Renaissance—came to an unsuccessful conclusion recently when the Mussolini Government denied authorization for it.

Hugo the Romantic

VICTOR HUGO, THE MAN AND THE POET. By William F. Giese. New York: The Dial Press. 1926. $4.

Reviewed by Christian Ganss

THERE are few recent volumes on French literature which I have read with more interest than this study of Victor Hugo by Professor William F. Giese. It has many admirable qualities. It is brilliantly written by one who wears his erudition lightly. It deals, as professorial work in this field does only too rarely, with the larger aspects of the problem. Yet it does not altogether please me. Perhaps I am finicky but my objection to it rests upon a feeling that the spirit which underlies it is such as to make it not so much a critical study of Victor Hugo as a satire upon him.

There is no denying that in certain respects it is an advantage to be hearty in one's hatreds. They make interesting reading even though they tend to vitiate criticism. From the first page to the last I have the suspicion that Professor Giese's attitude toward Hugo is the attitude of the elder Dumas toward beans. The author of "The Three Guardsmen" is reported to have repeated with gusto his enthusiastic disapproval of this vegetable. "I do not like beans and I am glad that I do not like them for if I did like them I'd eat them—and I detest them."

Professor Giese is proud of his distaste for most of Hugo's verses. He has a right to be if he so desires. Academic freedom permits it, but it is well to keep in mind that *superbia* is a sin not only in the church but in criticism, and I am afraid Professor Giese is prouder of his dislike than he can afford to be in case he wishes to be regarded as a judicial critic of Hugo and the French Romantics.

Professor Giese calls his volume, "Victor Hugo, the Man and the Poet." He devotes his first chapter to proving that Hugo was not much of a man and the remaining chapters to proving he was not much of a poet. He would have been more candid and his book would have been more nearly satisfactory had he taken as his title, "Victor Hugo at His Worst." This subject he treats with such mastery that he occasionally succeeds in making him out worse even than he actually was.

The place of Victor Hugo in literature, as Professor Giese sees it, is a much less important one than has generally been accorded to the author of "La Légende des Siècles." Had Professor Giese set himself this problem and had he dispassionately made his study and reached this conclusion, few readers would object. I have the feeling, however, that he began with his conclusion, that he deliberately set himself the task of belittling Hugo in the interest of a thesis. To shoot at this target he has been willing, as the Frenchmen say, to make his arrows of any wood. In the process, Professor Giese has shown himself to be one of the ablest men of letters in the American academic world. He is skilled in the art of fence. He thrusts the moment the lumbering Victor's guard is down. He deftly cuts out a purple patch, spits it on the point of his foil, and with a flourish shows you that it is only a gaudy little rag after all. He reminds one of a deft toreador, with no effort outwitting a blindly infuriated bull. At times he seems almost heartless, but it is entertaining no end and will meet with approval particularly by those who are tired of old admirations, who delight in having their Lives of Washington brought up to date, who are self-consciously modern, who are self-consciously superior. This a bit strange since Professor Giese is in no sense a modernist. He believes in the rule of reason and in the classical decalogue generally. He seems to be one of those Puritans of letters whose principles make it impossible for them to enjoy very much in the way of modern literature, and who compensate themselves by becoming almost romantically enthusiastic over the damnations which they mete out to the innumerable failures in the literary life. To read Professor Giese, one would imagine that verses like Hugo's grew on every bush. The result is paradoxical. Professor Giese treats Hugo as Mencken treats President Harding. If he lacks the Baltimorean's open-hearted beef-eating gusto, he far outdoes him in finesse. He does not belabor his victim with insults. He resorts to raillery, but the raillery is rarely good natured. Professor Giese is disposed to say it with sneers.

This is the more unfortunate as Professor Giese

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is fully capable of discerning the excellencies of Hugo's works, and perhaps thirty of his three hundred pages set these forth. Only Hugolaters would quarrel with the following estimate or its statement:

> Thus the most purely and persistently picturesque of all poets, and, within material limits, one of the most imaginative, would appear after all to have produced what seems very like a gallery of magnificent failures—we find so much landscape and so few landscapes, so many beauties and so little beauty. However, these are generalizations; and it would be unjust to Hugo, whose work is so full of infinite variety, to fail to note the often brilliant exceptions. The gallery of his paintings is so extraordinarily rich in specimens that we can afford to pass by nine out of ten. The remaining ones are still fairly numerous, and none of them are without really extraordinary merits of detail; and finally from among them we may sift out a still more restricted group which—in their kind—form a little collection of artistic masterpieces, very impressive in beauty and power, though of variable value and seldom quite as flawlessly perfect as the critics might wish.

Such, however, is not the general tenor of the volume. The brunt of it is devoted to displaying Hugo's colossal incompetence. The reason for this incompetence is to be sought in the fact that Hugo was a romantic, and the attempt to discredit the work of all but classical poets is frequently apparent. We can consider but one instance. Professor Giese repeats the statement that Hugo sees nature with a more discerning eye than he does man. He takes this as a text and continues,

> It is so with Théophile Gautier; it is so, I cannot but feel, even with Balzac; it is noticeably so with the realists and naturalists. That is the ineluctable curse which has been put upon whosoever sees only for the sake of seeing and describes only for the sake of describing.

Now what our critic tells us of Hugo is true, at least in part. Of Gautier it is certainly true. When he adds Balzac he has gone much too far. When he attempts to include all romanticists, realists, and naturalists, his hobby has led him into an unnecessary and unfortunate generalization which approaches the ridiculous. Montaigne was nearer right when he found man undulating and perverse at all times and in all movements. Some men are better portrait painters and psychologists; others are better landscape artists. They may or they may not be classicists, romanticists, realists, or naturalists. Certainly Tolstoy and Dostoievsky and the Flaubert of "Mme. Bovary," who are not classicists, escaped from this "ineluctable curse."

The portrait of Hugo, the man, presents all of his defects and for good measure adds a few others which he did not possess, or at best, did not possess so abundantly. We are told, "Those who allow themselves to see Hugo's exile from the angle of Parisian gossip are apt to see, instead of an august victim, a bearded old gentleman, perched on a beetling crag, shaking his fist and sputtering wild invectives seaward—while, at a little distance behind him, stands his mistress solicitously murmuring: *Mais, viens donc, viens donc, mon cheri! Tu t'enrhumeras!*"

There is no reason, in so brief a discussion of the man, for regarding Hugo's exile "from the angle of Parisian gossip." Professor Giese knows and has made it plain that Hugo was inordinately fond of popular applause, that to him Paris was life. To absent himself from it for eighteen years demanded at least a certain strength of will. It is not properly characterized as a "magnificent sulk." Furthermore, he was not physically a mollycoddle. He swam twice a day in the sea, was never afraid of colds or cold water, was capable of regular and long hours of work. For all Hugo's deficiencies, this side of his nature was more engaging than Professor Giese's emphasis here would indicate. Neither was he the near miser who is here caricatured. He had suffered poverty until 1830 and again in 1852 without crying out to high heaven, and yet declined an increase in his pension from Charles X which fact should in fairness have been mentioned, as well as the fact that in his later days his financial affairs were entrusted to one of his friends who had instructions to distribute in charities one-tenth of the amount spent by Hugo and his family. This does not make him excessively open-handed, but it proves him at least no better and no worse than the average man. So too, we are told that when "Hernani" meets opposition in the classic camp, "Hugo feels that he is, after the prime minister, the most-hated man in France, and the most-talked of." It would have been only fairness on Professor Giese's part to explain that this was not Hugo's own statement, but the opinion of one of the editors of the *Courrier Français*. In any estimate of Hugo as poet it would have been desirable to introduce a chapter on the part he played in the romantic "War of Liberation," and his signal services to the technique of French versification.

It would, however, be idle to go through this brilliant volume and attempt to make re-estimates. One of the author's qualities as a writer is his gift for epigrams. One of his weaknesses as critic is his inability to resist them. Most readers will rejoice in the fact for many of them are nuggets. Not all of them are critical gold. Some are only iron pyrites but all of them glitter. So we are told that Hugo "can do anything with words, except express ideas," and that he carries "his wit about him as a sort of concealed weapon to be produced only in great emergencies like a razor from a darky's boots." I have the feeling that the author cannot have seen Nietzsche's estimate of Hugo as "a lighthouse on a sea of nonsense" for it sums up the volume so neatly as to have made Professor Giese's work almost superfluous.

First Steps in Liberalism

CITIES AND MEN. By LUDWIG LEWISOHN. New York: Harper & Bros. 1927.

Reviewed by CHAUNCEY B. TINKER, Yale University

I HAVE always wanted to be a Radical—not a pale liberal, but a vermilion Revolutionist with whiskers and a program. I want to be in Movements, and let off guns at frightened Tories. I love Delacroix's enormous picture of the Genius of Liberty leading the People, which is now (most inconsistently, it seems to me), hung up in the Louvre. I feel that I ought to dust about and put an end to a good many things; and, in particular, I want to kick the bourgeois round the block.

But chiefly I want to be a literary radical. As I have said before, I want to be in the Movement. So I have taken to reading Messrs. Boyd and Lewisohn, and to mending my ways.

The Movement, as defined by Mr. Lewisohn, I find exceedingly alluring. "Protest, freedom, the free play of personality, the critical and distinguishing vision of the sum of things . . . the modern autobiographical instinct, the Judæo-Christian Protestant, Romantic, and saving speech and protest of the free man." All these I approve of and want —for myself. I don't like the adjectives, but perhaps I can swallow these. One must pay to get into any camp.

On the enemy side we have "the objective, classical tradition . . . the tradition of henchmen, of poets with no audience except the chieftain who threw them broken meats." This is a little surprising. Still, we must take sides. So here goes.

The game is to get the authors and poets of all time lined up in the rival camps. It is very like choosing players for Prisoners' Base. Our leader, Mr. Lewisohn, claims Matthew Arnold (who said things against Philistines, you recall), and promptly that apostle of sweetness and light joins us of the rebel camp; while Homer (who was a kind of henchman, living for aught I know on broken meats) is thrust into the other camp. Amos, an Israelite who flourished some eight centuries before Christ, is selected by Mr. Lewisohn for our side; while Racine is contemptuously surrendered to the adversary. Santayana, who loves monks and crusaders, cannot play with us, but we will take Professor Leonard because he speaks out. And so on. Hazlitt is taken, Scott is left. Saintsbury is taken, Gosse is not.

Sometimes, even as in playing Prisoners' Base, one feels the impulse to depart from one's new friends, and sign up with the other tribe. The atmosphere on our side is so electric, the proclamation of new dogmas so sudden. . . . "What becomes of pure art?" asks Mr. Lewisohn. "There is no such thing, except in the realm of the purely decorative." "The function of literature is not to multiply the bad examples of old, but to help save the world. . . ." One would like to put in a word, suggest a neat modification, submit a query; but there is no time. One remembers that he is a disciple now,—and a partisan. Our speed is vertiginous.

Whole cities go the way of the authors. They are accepted or rejected according to a principle that one would like to grasp. Is it a principle or only a grievance? Berlin is accepted; Venice is not. Is such a judgment required, one wonders, of all in the Radical Camp? One is a bit troubled by some of the repudiations of our leader. Of Venice we read:

> They [tourists] are conducted over the Bridge of Sighs into the dungeons. They are neither stupid nor hard of heart. But their imaginations have been corrupted by a wrong emphasis. Would they have themselves or those they loved unjustly imprisoned and tortured to wild and despairing cries and think a palace and a painting excuse or expiation or reward?

"Wrong emphasis"—ah, yes, that is precisely what is amiss.

Fragmentum Aureum

LIKE Abaris of old let me bestride
The arrow of Apollo as it flies
Afar, afar, o'er land and swaying tide,
Out through the boundless ether wherein lies
The pathway of the planets, and assize
From that high vantage the vast cosmic scene.
In a blue dusk of twilight let mine eyes
Rest in bewilderment and slowly glean
What joy I can endure with consciousness serene.

There is no past or future in this place.
Nothing is large or small or near or far.
No end and no beginning, time nor space
Exist where nothing was and all things are.
As here so everywhere, but no false star
Pins up the mantle of illusion now,
Cut from me by the new moon's scimitar,
And Vision, Beauty's trireme dips its bow
In waves of glittering stardust curling from its prow.

Here shall I see the white-winged fleets of souls,
Anchored in some dim roadstead of the moon,
Waiting new journeyings, new scenes and rôles,
All fairyland, gay as a blue balloon
Spangled with golden stars in the month of June,
Elves, djinns, and fays on astral currents buoyed,
Like flitting fireflies on some dim lagoon,
Tall angels flaming by from void to void,
And bright inhabitants from some far asteroid.

How strange our earth appears, a tiny midge,
Whirling with motes along the bright sunshine,
Above the bold sun's flaring, jagged ridge,
Yet suddenly beheld as if in trine,
A vast sphere, imminent, appalling, mine,
Seen on all sides at once and through and round,
All its impassioned, intricate design,
Wheeling enormous on its mighty bound,
Girded with rolling clouds and choired with curious sound.

So thick the curtain of our ignorance,
Nothing is as it seems through human eyes,
Tissues of obscuration, coils of chance,
Things as they are, perforce, complete surprise.
I have beheld too much in this new guise.
Let me go back, Far Darter, O! Apollo,
And hear again the laughter of the wise.
Let me go back though there be none to follow,
Though life forever after shall seem vain and hollow.

O! good red earth, how fair and sweet it is,
After grim space and all the frozen stars,
After those vague immensities of His,
To lean once more upon the pasture bars,
To hear the echoes of the tiny wars
That fill the meadow, and to breathe again
The breath of the white clover, see the scars
Scratched by the creaking harrow ere the grain.
What sacrament of swelling ecstasy—what pain.

The shadow of a cloud strides up the hill.
A crimson shiver comes upon the light.
Far in the wood a mournful whippoorwill
Heralds the coming dusk in purple dight.
Shrilling sweet vespers to the listening night,
Locust and katydid on every tree
Venture with vibrant viols. In my sight
More wonder lies than I can bear or see.
O! God how fair and beautiful thy world can be.

O. M. DENNIS.

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The Bowling Green

The Folder

ONE of the prettiest and most unexpected glimpses ever seen by a lover of surprise happened a year ago in the efficient sanctum of the American Library Association in Chicago. The A. L. A., perhaps you know, is the clearing house and archbishopric and methodical High Altar of the library world. It is the very shrine of bibliographic dexterity, the summum optimum of the card index and the scientific catalogue, the learned locus where all the equations of classification intersect. And there, in that supposedly unsentimental place, in the most magically modern of cities, was a tiny Kate Greenaway figure.

When I say tiny I use the word because no other will serve. She was magically small: she seemed like de la Mare's Miss M. Or even more like Mæterlinck's blue bird, for dressed in ultramarine of the quaintest pattern, with a blue bonnet half a century ago in mode, she was pecking blithely along bookshelves, and hopping up onto a little stepping block like a wren on a twig. She was then eighty years old, I believe; and even when she stood on her footstool she still looked up toward one like a child of ten.

Miss Emily Miller, of the A. L. A. staff, introduced me to her. With the kind (but I think erring) courtesy of librarians, she insisted on introducing me as someone who had written something. "I'm sure you have read some of his books," she said to the adorable lady of Lilliput. A guileless and yet oddly shrewd little face looked up.

"I reckon I have," she said. "What have you written?"

There was only one possible answer: to tell her that her favorite color was also mine, and that there had been a book with a lot about blue in it.

So when I heard that little Miss Adams had died, I asked Miss Miller to write a note about her. Here it is; and no one can ever tell me that the A. L. A. is a place where scientific cataloguing has outrun human kindness.

MARY ADAMS

Mary Adams was born in Hannibal, Missouri, where, as a girl, she had a slight acquaintance with Mark Twain. She was librarian in Hannibal for a time and meant to continue in that work; but, perhaps because of poor pay, she took up secretarial work instead, and became secretary to a man who was later elected governor of Missouri. After leaving him she came to Chicago and for some time was assistant to an oculist. She assisted him and kept his records, but found that this work made her nervous, so gave it up for fine sewing, at which she was expert. She made layettes for many years for the babies of leading Chicago families. All this time she read as much as she could. When her eyes grew tired from working on baby garments, she rested them on the pages of a book.

In 1926 she fell and broke her wrist and was obliged thereafter to give up sewing. Two of her old patrons then pensioned her, each sending a small monthly check until her death.

Miss Adams was very small, about four feet six; she dressed always in bright blue, with a little blue bonnet and, in winter, a blue cape over her suit of the same shade. The only change noted in her costume was the yearly bow of fresh blue tulle, which balanced the forget-me-nots and the pink rosebud on her bonnet. She was a familiar figure in certain Chicago neighborhoods—at the Art Institute on Sunday afternoons, in a south side park on summer days, at the American Library Association office on Monday noons. She came here to borrow new books, for she was a volunteer reader for the Booklist for years. She carried off five or six new books every Monday, always selecting them herself, and showed a remarkable catholicity of taste. She had to stand on a foot stool in order to look over the shelves, she was so tiny.

She read with pleasure Terhune's dog stories; she liked "The Glorious Adventure" because it was "so youthful," but biography was her favorite subject.

For many years before the A. L. A. came to Chicago, Miss Adams had been a borrower at the Chicago Public Library. When the Library was housed in the old City Hall, 40 or 50 years ago, she was a familiar figure there. All the successive librarians and assistants knew her. What more natural, then, that when the new public library building, on Michigan Avenue, was opened on a Monday morning in 1897, the doorkeeper be instructed to admit one tiny, blue-clad lady, who stood next to the door, and then to close the door again. So little Miss Mary Adams was the very first person to be allowed to draw out books in the magnificent new Library; and then, standing at the top of the marble stairway, she watched the crowds throng stairs and elevators.

Miss Adams spoke often of the kindness of conductors, policemen, and doormen, who were always ready to assist her, though she was not one to seek assistance. Though her life was shadowed by poverty, she never seemed to know she was poor and when, on her last visit to the A. L. A., someone wished her a happy Christmas, she replied: "All my days are happy."

Little Miss Adams died on Christmas Eve, as quietly and unobtrusively as she had lived. She was not ill; she simply went to bed and did not get up again. She was 81. A kindly neighbor brought back her borrowed books, for Miss Adams had told her "That one must be back on Tuesday"; (Monday was Christmas, and the office closed) "I promised them, and I have never failed them yet."

EMILY MILLER.

❧ ❧ ❧

A client in Baltimore responds very gracefully to a recent suggestion of the Bowling Green:

TO THE UNKNOWN POETS OF THE 17TH CENTURY
(*Now Revealed in Mr. Ault's Anthology*)

Though sealed within a yellowed book
Or musty vault's interned nook,
The dust of June hath sudden shook

A summer perfume round the place.
Unmarked, unknown, with lyric grace
These poets flung their songs in space,

But Time, with whom is nothing spent,
Hath on the airy element
Intuned, and now their negligent

Rich verse rings out like silver bells:
But what three-centuried citadels
Prison the rose and her sweet smells?

M. LETITIA STOCKETT.

❧ ❧ ❧

My Phoenician colleague collects Ferocious Sonnets; Mr. Don Marquis is a connoisseur of Savage Sonnets; here is one that drifts in with the mail which does not quite fall into either classification. Saturnine is too heavy a word, Scorpion is too sharp, yet it has a dainty barb in its tail:

TO AN ALGONQUINER

What have the long years taught me? Oh my dear,
So little, oh so little. Only this:
That you had never any need to fear
That life could prison you within a kiss.
If you had waited, Sweet, and had not fled
Leaving me bleating plaintively behind,
Love would have died a natural death, instead
Of ringing dusty echoes in my mind.

A week or two would have sufficed for me
To weary too. All other men before
And since have caused me copious ennui.
Gladly would I have opened wide the door
To set you free within a week or two. . . .
I should have grown, by then, so bored with you.

SUSAN DOE.

❧ ❧ ❧

What a nice fellow must be Mr. J. H. Edge who runs The Autograph Agency at 31 High Holborn, London. His catalogues are always interesting. He sells to American collectors only; evidently he enjoys his trips to this side, for his latest bulletin contains the following cordial ejaculation:

If I were asked to name the greatest thing in the world I should answer, unhesitatingly, Friendship. I visit the United States eight, nine, or ten times a year, and each time I return to England I *preach* America, but I don't tell people of your impressive buildings, of your industrial efficiency, or of your prowess in any form of commercial endeavor.

I tell them, and I delight to tell them, of the wonderful comradeship of the American people, of the hospitality you extend to Britishers, of your total lack of what we call in England "side." Those are the things that impress me most in the United States.

Whenever I visit you I am almost overwhelmed with offers of hospitality. Nine-tenths of them I cannot accept, because I am with you for so short a time, but I would like to reciprocate, and this is the only way in which I can do it—if you decide to visit London at any time, let me know. If I am in Town I shall be delighted to meet you at your port of arrival, or get a friend to do so, in order to render those little courtesies that mean so much. In London it will be as great a pleasure to me as to you to take you to one of my clubs or introduce you to one or two friends who will make your visit to England enjoyable, to "stand" you an old-fashioned English dinner, and then to go on to a theatre, and it will cost you nothing. The pleasure of your company and the satisfaction gained from repaying in some small measure the kindnesses that have been showered on me in the United States, will amply compensate me.

This invitation applies equally to the College boy who spends 10 to 50 dollars a year with the Autograph Agency as to the rich man who spends thousands of dollars a month.

❧ ❧ ❧

The London *Times* describes the burial of Thomas Hardy's heart in the country churchyard at Stinsford:

It is probable that many who were there had heard only the rumor of Hardy's greatness and were unacquainted with his work. At a glance it could be seen that they were the simple folk—the dairymen, the ploughmen, the woodmen, their wives and daughters too—whose daily lives and whose dramas of love, jealousy, revenge, and disappointment Hardy had chronicled. They had come, as their talk showed, to mourn one of themselves. It was always in some simple context that their memories of him were to be found. He had been met with bicycling about the countryside in the full vigor of his maturity, or strolling in the serenity of old age along the trout stream which led through the meadows from Max Gate to the graveyard at Stinsford. And as he was one of the most compassionate of writers, so, it appeared from the talk one heard to-day, he was one of the most sympathetic of neighbors. And yet, perhaps, the impression one received is that simple folk differentiated Mr. Hardy from other kindly, well-thought-of neighbors by the feeling about him that he cared more than most for the common things of the countryside. . . .

The gathering at Stinsford included also some landowners and farmers, some townsmen from Dorchester, and a very few mourners who motored across from the other side of the county. Those coming from a distance, whichever way they took, were brought into stirring and effortless contact with Hardy's work. Might not that hollow amid the ferns be where Troy flashed his sword about and about Bathsheba? Or, nearer Dorchester, on that solitary upland field, with its winter look of barrenness and austerity, might not Henchard have stood "like a dark ruin"; or that malthouse be where bashful Joseph Poorgrass was the butt of a convivial company gathered in the ruddy glow from the kiln-mouth. . . .

The service itself was of the simplest kind. There were three hymns—"O God, our help in ages past," "Lead, kindly light," and "Through all the changing scenes of life." The psalm was "The Lord is my shepherd."

The choir was an unsurpliced one, consisting in the main of dairymaids, domestic servants, and dairymen, but the singing, with an occasional dissonance to recall the Mellstock choir, seemed to deepen the impressiveness of the simple service. The Lesson, read by the vicar, was taken from Kings I., chapter xix., verses 9-19. Prayers were followed by the *Nunc Dimittis*, and as the voices of the choir and congregation died away the vicar, advancing to the altar steps, lifted the casket and carried it slowly along the aisle to the west door. The novelist's brother walked behind the vicar, and they were followed into the graveyard by the entire congregation.

Around the graves of the Hardy family, which lie near the urn-topped north gates under the shadow of a great yew tree, some two or three hundred people unable to gain admittance to the church waited, many of them with flowers. Before the committal prayer the casket, which had been deposited on the edge of the grave, was handed to a man standing within and by him slowly lowered to the place prepared for it in the Wessex soil.

❧ ❧ ❧

If John Mistletoe ever gets out another edition of his Book of Deplorable Facts I hope he will include the story of the time that very fine book "The Heart of Emerson's Journals" (edited by Bliss Perry) was sent out to its subscribers by the Book of the Month Club. The high-minded selecting committee, having found that book fascinating, were quixotic enough to think that their subscribers would also. Alas, so many members returned the book, asking for fiction instead, that the management of the Club grizzled visibly. A year or so later appeared "The Heart of Thoreau's Journals" (edited by Odell Shepard) and one of the committee, speaking only jocularly, suggested that it would be a good book to send out. Mr. Haas, the president of the Club, fell in a syncope and had to be revived with ammonia and burnt feathers.

This is apropos of nothing at all, except that I have not heard as much said about that volume of selections from Thoreau's Journals as it deserves. And I should like to point out that one of the most esteemed of modern writers, who is sometimes (and very absurdly) alluded to as a Second Conrad, is far more in the line of being a Second Thoreau. Have you never noticed how his prose is in the very cadence of the man of Walden? I mean of course H. M. Tomlinson.

Not long ago I came across a charming photograph of the little rustic School of Philosophy building at Concord, which I'm sorry to say I've never seen, though I think of it as one of the most honorable shanties on this continent. I sent the picture on to H. M. T., who replied in high spirits:

By the way, I've *seen* that Hall of Philosophy, Concord. I told 'em straight at Harvard, when I lectured to the Union, that it was for them to know, as Thoreau graduated from there, as did Emerson, that I was but bringing back some notions to the place of their origin. Won't America admit any damn thing for herself? And me walking about Tower Hamlets with Walden in my pocket nearly forty years ago! My first bit of print, in the "East End News," was about Thoreau. I used to read Leaves of Grass by the wall of the East India Dock. I've sung to myself "When me you fly I am the wings" on the Isle of Dogs.

❧ ❧ ❧

Dear Sir (or Madam):

Lest we be forgotten in your country, wherein the laws have forbidden a business which we still, in England, hold to be an honest and an honorable one, we send you herein a copy of our Export Price List.

We do not know if we shall ever again be able to carry on our trade with the United States of America. To us it seems as though this extra commandment which has been added to the decalogue, lacking divine authority, will not always endure. And so we hope that, some day, the laws of your country will suffer wine at least to enter your Ports, so that Alcohol as an intoxicant may be replaced by Alcohol in its harmless—nay, healthful—beverage form.

—*Letter from a famous London wine merchant, January 1928.*

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books of Special Interest

Character

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CHARACTER. By A. A. ROBACK. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927. $5.50.
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY. By P. F. VALENTINE. New York: D. Appleton & Company, New York. 1927. $2.50.
THE SOCIAL BASIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS. By TRIGANT BURROW. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1927. $4.

Reviewed by WOODBRIDGE RILEY
Vassar College

CHARACTER, personality, and consciousness are three inter-related problems much in the public mind. In the work of Roback we are offered a mine of historical information and also the latest findings in the study of character in a thorough manner but, at the same time, in a clear and highly interesting style. The author declares that in the department of psychology dealing with character and temperament no progress seems to have been made for about two thousand years, in spite of the fact that it was perhaps the first topic to attract attention.

As far back as the Greek writer Theophrastus the problem was attacked on the descriptive side and the same differences among individuals were discovered as exist among twentieth-century Americans. The same thing is true of the treatment of Immanuel Kant, and curiously enough both these writers, although centuries apart, used the ancient division of temperaments into the quartet phlegmatic, choleric, sanguine and bilious. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the French writers were more acute, La Bruyère, for example, describing in brilliant fashion what we would now call extroverts and introverts. Even now an author like Jung utilizes the doctrine of temperaments and humors and finds fantastic combinations far down in the unconscious. Succeeding the humoral philosophy attempted explanations arose upon the basis of chemistry, physics and molecular vibrations, and at present there is a considerable vogue for explaining character by bodily proportions, as in the relation between the trunk and the legs. Further, the bio-chemists have centered their discussion of personality about the various colloidal states of the organism, human beings consisting of "walking lumps of jelly," and temperament depending on whether its properties are seml-liquid or coagulating. These explanations seem not far removed from phrenology which simply proves what it set out to prove, or even that modern form of physiognomy which attempts to judge what jobs workmen are fitted for by the shape of their faces. However, the old doctrines seem now to be having a revival, and the "lure of the glands" shows considerable relation between the ancient humors of the blood and modern hormones. Indeed it seems as if big business were nowadays depending upon the tenets of old Galen in determining the "hiring and firing" of their employees. For example, it is held that all salesmen should be sanguine.

But the time is now ripe for experiment and psychological tests. Here the Germans, French, and Americans seem to be in the lead, whereas the British have lagged behind. At Oxford, as Professor McDougall has recently pointed out, psychology is not considered serious enough to be put on the examinations for degrees. But with the more scientific nations matters are different. As the author says by the aid of tests and questionnaires, and the coöperation of public institutions, we may anticipate in the not distant future a body of data which would be of incalculable value not only theoretically, but practically in the reduction of the amount of unhappiness caused so frequently by the following factors: "the entering into relationships without sufficient insight into one another's natures, misunderstandings dûe to unfamiliarity with temperaments other than our own, obstacles in the way of terminating fundamentally incompatible relationships, temperamental adjustment in the industrial system, the effects of various foods, drugs, alcoholic beverages, etc., on one's temperamental disposition."

In the study of these dispositions Roback finally warns us against too much dependance on psychoanalysis saying that in the patented variety of this method of investigation the analysists find so little rationality in human behavior that they deny there is any. The book closes with a highly valuable summary of the present movements and methods in the psychology of character.

Valentine's work also gives both sides of the problem of personality in a clear and lively style and at once points out the difficulty of the subject. He claims that personal traits make limitless combinations as was shown in the army alpha tests where the general intelligence of a million and a half men was investigated. He concludes that, because of the complex and diffused aspects of behavior, it is difficult, if not impossible, to measure traits on scales yielding standard arithmetical scores. Last year's meeting of the American Psychological Association confirmed this statement, for a concerted attack was made on the fetish which the public has made of the intelligence quotient. In another difficult subject, the burning question of so-called race inferiority, the author gives both sides of the question, and explodes the Nordic sea myth by showing that environmental factors have been neglected as in Madison Grant's "The Passing of the Great Race" and Carl Brigham's "A Study of American Intelligence."

An extreemly interesting chapter is one entitled Instincts: Tyrant or Ghost? Here the current view that human instincts are almost negligible is presented and an attack is made upon McDougall's and Veblen's hypothesis that instincts are differentials of the *élan vital*. In place of this view the tendency seems to be to reduce instincts to a few reflexes and to emphasize habit-forming capacities. Instead of making instincts the springs of human action, as, for instance, in the "instinct" for war, it seems possible to emphasize the education of our habits of thinking and reeducation when bad habits are to be cured. It is here that psychiatry comes in and the purging of the unconscious as the very source of personality. This, however, can be over-emphasized as is apparent in the work of the next writer.

Burrow's work is extremely difficult because of its technical language and involved style. As the work of a practical psychoanalyst with an experience of a score of years, it is interesting in showing how the old Freudian notions have been modified. Freud's psychology, it is stated, is inadequate to render completely conscious those disorders of the personality the essential meaning of which is their unconsciousness. Freudianism is too personalistic in conception. Hence, its variations are to-day as whimsical as they are many. By one process of handling, psychoanalysis has become closely allied with Mysticism and New Thought, by another with propagandist measures for scientific birth control, by a third with an authenticated programme of sexual license, and with all it is but a new form of application of the old programme of palliative medication. From this it is argued that there should be an elimination of the personal equation in relation to these problems, by which is meant the unconscious and arbitrary tendency within us all to adopt a personally systematized mental attitude toward life in substitution for the physiological reality of life itself. Here our experience as a group has led us inevitably to the conclusion that the personal analysis is a self-contradictory process, that only as the individual realizes through his societal experience the futility of the personal or private basis is it biologically possible to be truly in harmony with a healthy and constructive environment.

Archæological

THE ETRUSCANS. By DAVID RANDALL-MACIVER. Oxford University Press. 1927. $2.

Despite a slight aversion induced by an overstatement printed on the jacket the reviewer can commend this book heartily. It is not the first nor the best of its kind. Ducati's "Etruria Antica" comes nearer deserving that description; but that book has not been translated into English. Randall-MacIver knows his material; he has the gift of selecting as guideposts for his story the really significant archæological data; he commands a lucid and persuasive style, and he keeps his grip firmly on a sound historical sense that directs a sagacious imagination *en route* between the somewhat remote facts. As an introduction to the fascinating story of the Etruscans, their art and civilization, this brief account of less than forty thousand words is as good as anything that this generation is likely to have in the English language. There is only one objection that need be mentioned, and that concerns not the main theme but the provenance of the inhuming people east of Etruria. The author, like most archæologists, disregards the evidence of language in his devotion to potsherds and bones.

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HARPERS

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The Wits' Weekly

Conducted by EDWARD DAVISON

Competition No. 19. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the brightest glimpse of our own advertising columns as they might appear in an issue during the spring publishing season of A. D. 2428. Competitors may record this glimpse of the future in their own way (provided they limit themselves to 400 words) but we recommend a list of "choice items," each including the title of the book, the names of author and publisher, and a brief blurb. (Entries should reach *The Saturday Review* office not later than the morning of February 27.)

Competition No. 20. A prize of fifteen dollars is offered for the best Macaronic Sonnet. Competitors should indicate the sources of their lines in footnotes. (Entries should reach the *Saturday Review* office, 25 West 45th Street, not later than the morning of March 5th.) Competitors are advised to read carefully the rules printed below.

THE SIXTEENTH COMPETITION

A prize of fifteen dollars was offered for the best poem justifiably called "The Pun."

WON BY IGNOTO

THE PRIZE-WINNING POEM

THE PUN

A MEAN is mean, I mean in Mien,
Upon my word it is,
That made a Maid who'd seen a Scene
Miss seeing Scenes amiss.
If Miss once miss, Miss is mismade;
We miss no Maids at this:
'Tis but the Scene we've seen mislaid—
Mismade is made amiss.
Thus Miss might miss without a Scene,
Though seen amiss, and this
That means in Mien what might have Been
A Mean is mean, I mean in Mien,—
A Pun, my word, it is!

IGNOTO.

I suppose I ought to have known better than to set such a subject. Nobody did really well with it, not even Ignoto who takes the prize because, on the whole, his puns do subserve the general idea of his poem. He had very little real competition. Isabel Fiske Conant submitted an interesting four lines which were too slight to do justice to her originality. She writes: "I have been interested for some time in using a dignified and serious double meaning in poetry, in one word, as the Japanese deftly do, continually. In this poem there is a difficulty in the writing, though not in the speaking, of the last word."

Christ rose at Easter.
And the garden knows
How his white feet ascended
From a lily and arose.

She also suggests a possible double meaning in the word "knows." One may doubt whether this game is worth the candle: but I wish Mrs. Conant had experimented at greater length.

A good imitation of Hood would have beaten Ignoto. There were several attempts, none of them much better than H. M. R.'s.

Jest fashioned in a lighter vein,
The light vain I evoke;
'Tis true I have such taking ways
Some take me for a joke.

Although by Shakespeare once embraced
And offered to a Queen,
With lowly mien behold me walk,
And with the lowly mean.

Yet do I laugh and mock the grave,
However grave the sound;
I may be trampled under foot,
But never can be ground.

When Quip and Sally leave you cold
And make you weep for fun,
When you think other humor's bad,
Then think upon the Pun.

Deborah Champion Jones wrote a sonnet working up to Shakespeare's "Put out the light, and then—put out the light"—but is this an undoubted pun? Other outstanding punsters were J (a) P (e) Devere Allen, Miriam Teichner, and W. A. E., but I dare not quote from their poems. Aldan Friedel wrote a rather obscure ballade; Alice Boorman Williamson spoiled her defense of the pun with a bad *cliché*, but she began well with—

The chief denouncer of the pun
Is he who cannot compass one . . . .

Mabel DeWoody wrote about a cannibal king who

"would not feed on the edible seed
Of the bunya-bunya tree.
He married a wife, in the modern way,
. . . . (I regret to state)
For then in the curious can-nible way
He his companion-ate.

I. B. Rust contrived some verses round Porson's famous pun on gerund endings.

"When Dido found Aeneas would not come
She mourned in silence, and was Di-Do Dum."

Irvin A. Johnson wrote a medieval-like fragment and A. E. Hausfrau sent another of her burlesques.

I never heard a decent pun
I never hope to hear one.
But I tell you in the name of fun
I'd rather hear than cheer one.

Ruth H. Whittemore's dentist comes home over a bridge in the teeth of the wind, and T. G. Mobile was the best of several competitors who seemed to know of Mr. Morley's weakness for puns.

In Classics we have but to go
To Caesar and to Cicero
While Hood unmasks a countless clan
And Morley makes them when he can.
Hell's foundation got a shock
When Peter was yclept a rock.

But here ends our tale of puns. Only one more thing remains; that is to print I. Felix Awstead's incredible phonetics. I shall go mad if anybody writes to complain of the "desecration of Wordsworth." Let me insist here and now that, excepting two others, Wordsworth is my favorite poet. But I like this none the less for that.

THE PUN

(With sufficient apologies to administer an opiate to Wordsworth's ghost.)

Thee whirled a stew much widows: latent soon,
Get in and spend tin, Willie way star powers:
Little wee see innate chew rat 'tis sours;
Weave give now are arts a weigh us or did boon!
This seethe at bear Sir Booze hum tooth thum moon;
The wind sat Will B. Howell in gat tall lours,
Endor up Gath heard an owl Ike's leaping flours;
Forth hiss, forever wreathing, we rout tough tune;
Hit moves us knock.—Greek hod! Died wrath her bee
A pig unsuckled dinner Cree doubt worn;
Sew my ties tandem honest pleasantly,
Have glim, says Atwood, make mealless furl on;
Have sigh tough approaches rye sing from the C;
Or Harold try t' unblow is wreath adorn.

I. FELIX AWSTEAD.

RULES

(Competitors failing to comply with these rules will be disqualified.)

1. Envelopes should be addressed to "The Competitions Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature*, 25 West 45th Street, New York City." The number of the competition (e. g., "Competition 1") must be written on the top left-hand corner. 2. All MSS. must be legible—typewritten if possible—and should bear the name or pseudonym of the author. Competitors may offer more than one entry. MSS. cannot be returned. 3. *The Saturday Review* reserves the right to print the whole or part of any entry.

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Foreign Literature

An Argentine Novel

TIERRA DE JAGUARES. By HUGO WAST. 1927.

Reviewed by HERMINE HALLAM HIPWELL

COMPARED with other, older, nations Argentina barely boasts a hundred years of history. Dating from the wars of independence, started in the year 1810, there is little in those years of guerrilla warfare to tempt any but the most patriotic writer, and it is on this account that the historical novel dealing with Argentina has found but little favor with writing men. One notable exception is afforded by José Mármol's "Amalia" which deals with the days of Rozas the Tyrant's reign. This book, however, can hardly be considered to belong to the historical novel class as it was written during the very days of the federal tyranny and is in the main autobiographical.

The Argentine reading public, however, is avidly interested in everything connected with the early days of the republic, and it is this interest which explains the popularity of a writer like Hugo Wast, whose latest novel, "Tierra de Jaguares," was published early this winter.

This book forms the last of a series of novels dealing with the early years of Argentine independence when the Spanish menaced the young republic on all sides, and the Triumvirate ruling in Buenos Aires was already breaking up, unable to quell the spirit of dissatisfaction prevalent in the provinces. Its characters are royalist refugees wandering in the Paraná Delta in order to escape from the oppression of the Triumvirate. Mr. Wast, which is the pen name used by D. Martínez Zuviria, however, is too true a *criollo* to sympathize wholly with the Spaniards, and it is on this account that the son and daughter of the fugitive, Altolaguirre, as well as his faithful retainers are represented as staunch patriots—and by patriots are meant those who fought, plotted, and worked, for the welfare of the young republic—whom circumstance has placed in a wholly false position.

The plot of the novel is slight, opening with the flight of the Altolaguirres from Buenos Aires, and ending with the victory of the patriots at San Lorenzo. The wanderings of the royalists are cleverly described with a wealth of detail concerning the Paraná Delta which makes interesting reading. Various *criollo* types, too, are sketched with a great deal of understanding insight into their peculiar semi-Indian character, which even today makes of them enigmatic creatures to the average northerner. Life in the delta, which today, fully one hundred years later, is still wild, mysterious, and full of danger for the uninitiated, at the beginning of the last century must have been hazardous and uncertain. Indeed the dangers forever hovering over Altolaguirre's family—dangers from men, beasts, and the elements—have not been one whit exaggerated by the author, who knows his subject thoroughly and is thus able to give to his readers a vivid impression of those semi-tropical islands, the refuge in those days of Indians, half castes, deserters from the army, and wandering *matreros*, or lonely gauchos living chiefly by pillage.

For it is as a faithful interpreter of the life of the people, today and yesterday, that Hugo Wast excels. His style is often slipshod, his plots rarely surprise by their ingenuity, while his heroes and villains are generally obviously very good or very bad, but his *criollo* men and women, the servants to be found in the houses of the great, the riders of the plains, the *gauchos malos* or outlaws, the *chinas* or semi-Indian women, are all of them alive with their charming faults and enduring virtues. Hugo Wast understands thoroughly these people whom modernity, civilization, and cosmopolitan ideals are slowly but surely driving further and further away from the great cities and into the little known corners of the republic. To all who appreciate the life of the Argentine countryside, Hugo Wast's novels are full of a delicate charm, vivid descriptions of an ever interesting countryside, quaint tales of bygone days, and stirring episodes connected with the brave deeds of long ago heroes. And in these days of introspection and brooding self analysis, the fresh naïveté of Hugo Wast's outlook comes as a welcome change in the none too encouraging world of Argentine fiction.

Argentine Poetry

EL CANTARO Y EL ALFARERO. By FERNAN FELIX DE AMADOR. 1927.

IN Argentina the poetaster, who woos his Muse with grandiloquent and passionate gesture and a vocabulary pompous and absurd, is one of the many burdens of the foreign reviewer's life.

The Spanish language—the language of God according to medieval writers, versed in these matters—is, with its flowing syllables and the cadence of the sonorous words in which still lingers a hint of liquid Moorish vowel sounds, an easy trap for the unwary rhymester. In this country indeed, prose is often closely allied and at times almost mistaken for poetry—poetry on the grand scale in the manner of Calderón de la Barca or Lope de Vega. When these things are considered it is hardly to be wondered at that Argentina's youth, during the long summer nights when the sky is heavy with stars and the perfume of jasmine and roses rises, an enervating incense, from countless riverside gardens, feels compelled to fling its yearnings into flaming, if banal, verse.

That these youngsters all take themselves seriously is undoubtedly wearisome, and it is a pity that unlike too many of their more talented but less fortunate rivals, they are apparently always able to afford a limited yet costly edition of their effusions.

It is on this account that the small group of Argentine poets who truly deserve the title, and who from time to time publish their works in slim, ably-illustrated, volumes, are doubly welcome. Indeed the lyrics of men such as Ricardo Gutierrez, Leopoldo Lugano, Alfredo Bufano, Lagorio and Fernan Felix de Amador, with their sound workmanship, the tender feeling underlying the slow music of the verse, the beauty and brevity of the forms chosen to convey precisely the poet's thoughts to his reader, come always as a glad surprise. For here is no grandiloquence, but instead a simplicity all the more charming and pleasing when it is remembered how difficult of attainment this same simplicity is in the Spanish language. And among the most simple and at the same time most eloquent of the younger generation of Argentine poets must be counted Fernán Felix de Amador, whose last volume of verse was published early this year.

At one time an ardent admirer of Rubén Dario, acting as his secretary during those hectic days in Paris when the great poet represented one of the Central American republics in a diplomatic capacity, Amador in his latest work shows little or no trace of his master's influence. For Dario's style greatly influenced such early works as "El Libro de las Horas" and "Las Lamparas de Arcilla." In the volume under review, however, Amador reveals himself an exquisitely humble lover of the earth, the wide sea, the gold of sunset and the faint rose of dawn, the mysterious tracings on a deserted beach; his love is tinged with delicate melancholy when he writes of men and the strange works of their hands. Indeed, Amador's muse has always been a trifle melancholy. He seeks in symbols an explanation for the mystery of life. And he regards life with some of the Psalmist's detachment—a lonely singer in the midst of a noisy multitude, proud of his solitude.

Under a sub-heading, "Plain, Sea, and Sky," are gathered those fugitive poems in which the poet delights. They are most of them slight but lovely, impregnated as it were with the melancholy which Amador wears so gracefully. Of these short lyrics the finest are perhaps those in which the poet invokes the sea. Thus in "Dulce Daño" Amador writes the following quatrain:

'Un estremecimiento de raso hay en la playa
donde el viento pasea en sandalias de espuma. . . .
Mas qué pasó, que al pronto todo se asombra y calla?
—Es que desnuda y triste entra en el mar: la luna.

Translation of the lines is impossible, since they lose all their beauty in the process, yet could anything be more delicate than the second line which reads: "where the breeze is walking in sandals of foam?" This little poem with its quiet beauty has all the charm of a Japanese design, and though there is no hint of oriental influence in any of the poems, there are times when the poet recalls the East by means of his attitude to the world about him.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

NINE ESSAYS. By ARTHUR PLATT. Cambridge University Press. (Macmillan.) 1927.

Mr. Platt was a Cambridge man and Professor of Greek, in University College, London, for thirty years. His chief scholastic works were his edition of Homer, his translations from Aristotle and Aeschylus, and contributions to the *Classical Review* and the *Journal of Philology*. Mr. Housman thinks that his minute and refined studies, in these periodicals, of Homeric metrical and grammatical usage were his most characteristic and probably most valuable contributions.

But he was a man of varied culture and great personal charm. These nine essays were public addresses, and only four of them on classical subjects. Three are on Fitzgerald, La Rochefoucauld, and Cervantes, and very admirable studies they are, wise, witty, and urbane.

In looking back over the many essays in volumes, examined during recent years, two remarks occur to the reviewer. A majority of the essayists were either professional writers or college professors, and the first remark is: that if the essays of the academic men are somewhat less awake to the new phenomena of literature, on the other hand they are apt to carry more weight and substance; that the modern professional critic of life and letters is vigorously outspoken and does not always weigh his words, and the academic man is more deliberate and self-critical. The second remark is: that there is much less difference between the groups than between individuals within each group.

This is rather what one would expect. The modern critic has usually a college background, and the wind of the world blows through the colleges more than it used to. The road between the university and the press or periodical is well travelled and runs both ways. Bad academic writing tends to be conscientious, but wooden; bad professional writing to be lively, but cheap; the good writing of each tends toward the other.

THE GREAT AMERICAN BAND-WAGON. By *Charles Merz*. Day.

A BUNCH OF NONSENSE. By *Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll*, and others. Dutton (Everyman's Library). 80 cents.

CONTEMPORARY ESSAYS. Edited by *William T. Hastings*.

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN ITS FOREIGN RELATIONS. By *Laurio Magnus*. Dutton. $3.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CARILLON AND OTHER ADDRESSES. By *W. L. Mackenzie King*. Macmillan.

PREFACES, INTRODUCTIONS, AND OTHER UNCOLLECTED PAPERS. By *Anatole France*. Dodd, Mead.

THE HARMONIES OF NATURE. By *H. W. Shepherd-Walwyn*. Dodd, Mead.

A SEA CHEST. By *C. Fox Smith*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.

A CURIOUS HISTORY IN BOOK EDITING. By *Kate Stephens*. Antigone Press, 236 West 15th Street, New York City. $2.50.

Biography

FRANCESCO PETRARCA, THE FIRST MODERN MAN OF LETTERS. HIS LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE: A STUDY OF THE EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY (1304-1347) VOL. II: SECLUDED STUDY AND PUBLIC FAME. By EDWARD H. R. TATHAM. Macmillan. 1927.

The first volume of Canon Tatham's extensive work on Petrarch, briefly reviewed in these pages on July 3, included chapters on the state of Italy and the Papacy from 1300 to 1342, on Petrarch's early life and letters, his Italian lyrics, and his relations with "Laura." The second volume now before us begins with an account of the Latin classics in the Middle Ages, and covers the poet's first and second sojourns at Vaucluse (1337-1347), and the important episode of his coronation at Rome (1341); also the composition of his Latin epic "Africa," and of the autobiographical dialogue "Secretum," with an analysis of each. The famous "Letter to Posterity" and several other letters are given in an excellent English translation. Little is said in this volume about "Laura" and the Italian poems, except that the patriotic ode "Italia mia" is quoted in translation and thoroughly discussed. Petrarch's relations with Cola di Rienzo are touched upon, but a fuller discussion is reserved for the next volume, together with the poet's life and works after 1347.

The author's main interests are the character of Petrarch, particularly as shown in his Latin writings, and the political and ecclesiastical history of the period; and these are made vividly interesting. The average educated man, even though, as Canon Tatham says, "his interest may be aroused by some crumbling ruin in his own neighborhood," has no clear idea of the conditions under which the states of modern Europe awoke to national consciousness; the details of individual lives, interpreted with the proper political and intellectual background, make us realize that the men of the fourteenth century were more like ourselves than we are apt to suppose. From this point of view, Petrarch is supremely important; and the present publication, when completed, promises to be the most comprehensive general account of his life and times, his friends and his writings, available in English. In spite of a few inaccurate or inadequate statements, it is based on faithful study of the available material, some of which has not hitherto been used in a work of this kind.

(*See page* 607)

Fiction

"WALT." By ELIZABETH CORBETT. Stokes. 1928. $2.50.

This author lets the Good Gray Poet speak for himself in some of the series of colloquies that make up this volume. The book is undeniably interesting; the voices of the principal actors in the story of Walt Whitman's life talk to us convincingly out of the past in dramatic scenes and conversations. Louisa Van Velsor Whitman has her say, Edward C. Clarke, Hartshorne, Clements, Brenton, Ned Wilkins, Murphy, McClure, and Van Anden. Here is the delicious Fernande Desmoulins of New Orleans (Whitman's Southern love), her inimical father, old Pfaff of the famous Pfaff's basement restaurant on Broadway near Bleecker, the literary figures of Poe and Emerson, John Burroughs, and the English Edward Carpenter. Whitman's whole varied life is traced through brief encounters presented in dialogue; an interesting and original conception, the execution of which holds the attention and gives a well-rounded idea of Walt. It is neither academic biography nor a biographical novel, but the whole pageant of a great life is condensed in these pages. This book, together with Grant Overton's "The Answerer" and Cameron Rogers's "The Magnificent Idler," is new proof that the story of one who remains perhaps our greatest American poet has exerted no inconsiderable fascination upon the minds of this age, even as much modern poetry is proof of his artistic influence. We are glad to possess this new and freshly-fashioned contribution to much exhaustive Whitmania. Where Whitman is taught it should prove excellent collateral reading for beginners in the study of his career.

TRAGEDY AT RAVENTHORPE. By *J. J. Connington*. Little, Brown. $2 net.

THE GOLDEN BUBBLE. By *Courtney Ryley Cooper*. Little, Brown. $2 net.

MRS. CRADDOCK. By *W. Somerset Maugham*. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

ONSLAUGHT. By *Joan Sutherland*. Harpers. $2.

THE CABIN AT THE TRAIL'S END. By *Sheba Hargreaves*. Harpers. $2.

THE WAY THINGS ARE. By *E. W. Delafield*. Harpers.

RED RUST. By *Cornelia James Cannon*. Little, Brown. $2.50 net.

THE BLESSING OF PAN. By *Lord Dunsany*. Putnam. $2.

PEGGY BY REQUEST. By *Ethel M. Dell*. Putnam. $2.

CHILDREN OF THE FOG. By *Carmel Haden Guest*. Putnam. $2.

GEORGIAN STORIES. Edited by *Arthur Waugh*. Putnam. $2.50.

ORPHAN DINAH. By *Eden Phillpotts*. (Widecombe Edition). Macmillan.

MISER'S MONEY. By *Eden Phillpotts*. (Widecombe Edition). Macmillan.

MR. FORTUNE, PLEASE. By *H. C. Bailey*. Dutton. $2.

THE VOICE OF THE SEVEN SPARROWS. By *Harry Stephen Keeler*. Dutton. $2.

LUCK AND OTHER STORIES. By *Mary Arden*. Day. $2 net.

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THE GYPSY. By *W. B. Trites*. Stokes. $2.

THE DOOR UNLATCHED. By *Marie Cher*. Minton, Balch. $2.

(*Continued on next page*)

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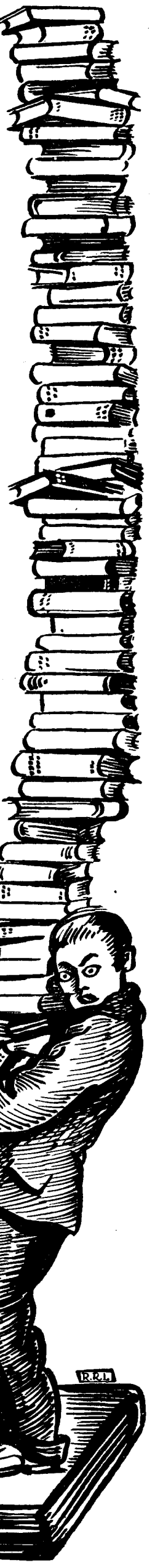

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

Miscellaneous

THEODORE DREISER. A Bibliography. By EDWARD D. MACDONALD. Philadelphia: The Centaur Book Shop. 1928. $3.50.

Under unnecessary limitations of time and knowledge, Professor MacDonald has done a fairly good job in collating twenty-one first editions of books and pamphlets and listing many of Dreiser's contributions to periodicals and books, as well as reviews and studies by other hands. But Professor MacDonald fails to collate several existing first editions, which failure robs the work of its value as a trustworthy reference book for collectors. He also omits several "points" in the books considered, an inexcusable fault in a bibliographer. His reference (4 pages) to the much-discussed work, "Studies of Contemporary Celebrities," is nothing but pure conjecture when, in point of fact, authentic data exist. The foreword by Dreiser was written for another bibliographer a year ago.

LOEB CLASSICS: LIRA GRAECA, III. Translated by *J. M. Edmonds Athanaeus. "The Depnosophists,"* translated by *C. B. Gulich;* Josephus, "The Jewish War, Books I-III," translated by H. L. J. Thackeray; Plato, Vol. III, translated by W. R. W. Lamb; Isæus, translated by E. S. Forster. Cicero, "Letters to His Friends," translated by W. Glynn Williams. Dio's Roman History, translated by L. E. Cary. The Attic Nights of Aulus Gellius, translated by J. G. Rolfe. Putnam. 8 Vols. $2.50 each.

ANNALS OF NIAGARA. By *William Kirby*. Macmillan.

THE AMERICAN NEGRO. By *Melville J. Herskowitz*. Knopf.

PSYCHOLOGY FOR EXECUTIVES. By *Elliott Dunlap Smith*. Harpers. $3.50.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. By *Albert Perry Brigham*. Oxford University Press. $3.

A CONCORDANCE TO THE ENGLISH POEMS OF GEORGE HERBERT. Compiled by *Cameron Mann*. Houghton, Mifflin. $5.

TALES OF S. O. S. AND T. T. T. By *Bennet Copplestone*. Houghton, Mifflin. $2.

THE CHILDREN'S READING. By *Frances Jenkins Olcott*. Houghton, Mifflin. $2.

THE HOUSEHOLD DICTIONARY. By *Winnifred. S. Fales*. Dodd, Mead. $1.50.

STRANGE SEA MYSTERIES. By *Elliott O'Donnell*. Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

PICTORIAL GOLF. By *H. B. Martin*. Dodd, Mead. $2.

Poetry

SCRAPPED SILVER. Portland, Maine: The Mosher Press. 1928. $1.

Two hundred and sixty copies have been printed of this attractive little book, which is the by-product of a term in a class at the Scoville School for the appreciation (not the writing) of poetry, conducted by Isabel Fiske Conant, herself a well-known American poet. Ten girls of sixteen and seventeen years have supplied the contributions. They are light, fanciful, and a few very graceful.

GUINEA-FOWL AND OTHER POULTRY. By *Leonard Bacon*. Harpers. $2.

TO YOUTH. By *John V. A. Weaver*. Knopf. $2.

PAMPHLET POETS: *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Lizette Woodworth Reese, Alfred Kreymborg, Conrad Aiken*. Simon & Schuster. 4 pamphlets. 25 cents each.

PALACE OF SILVER. By *Kate Slaughter McKinney*. Vinal. $2.

THEODICY. By *The Hermit Bard*.

IDLE HOURS. By *Alice Dows*. Dorrance. $1.75.

POEMS. Written by Students while Attending Hunter College High School. New York.

SONNETS OF SIMONETTA. By *Helen Gerry*. New York: Georgian Press.

ARCANA. By *Alice G. Wilkins*. Vinal.

GREEN MOUNTAIN ECHOES. By *Ella Warner Fisher*. Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle.

THE CLOCK STRIKES TWO. By *Henry Kitchell Webster*. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.

BRIGHT AVENUES. By *Josephine Bentham*. Hinkle. $2.50.

THE MONK OF HAMBLETON. By *Armstrong Livingston*. Hinkle. $2.

FIRST POEMS. By *Evelyn Spencer*. London. Blackwell.

QUERY. By *France Frederick*. Vinal. $1.50.

AFTERWARD. By *Ruth Mason Rice*. Vinal. $1.50.

Here's to Crime

(*Continued from page 610*)

SECONDARY CHOICES

THE PORTRAIT INVISIBLE. *Joseph Gollomb*. Macmillan.

"The Goldfish" is an interesting and peculiar psychoanalytic detective. The story has dramatic values but is pretty theatrical.

A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE. *Louis Tracy*. Clode.

Fair enough for Tracy, but not nearly so good a story as he can write.

THE SMILING DEATH. *Francis D. Grierson*. Clode.

A bookseller villain, but he palls. Mark the "insufflator" for thumb-marks! Also "Akee," the poisonous "fruit of a small West Indian sapindaceous tree." Dear old Professor Wells of "The Zoo Murder" does the trapping.

THE THOUSAND HANDS. *Bruce Norman*. Lincoln MacVeagh.

I, myself, cannot stand a gang of international crooks.

THE CLOCK STRIKES TWO. *Henry Kitchell Webster*. Bobbs-Merrill.

Telephone with a solanoid relay. Pretty love story. Eccentric grandfather. No arrests.

THE MASTER MIND. *Cleveland Moffett*. Appleton.

French locale. Coquenil is the master mind. It's a thorough book.

THE DEATH MAKER. *Austin J. Small*. Doubleday, Doran.

Preposterous but exciting. Something every minute.

QUEEN OF CLUBS. *Hulbert Footner*. Doubleday, Doran.

You know these night clubs! Go back and read his "Madame Storey."

TERROR KEEP. *Edgar Wallace*. Doubleday, Doran.

If you like all sorts of secret passages and caves and that sort of thing. Big earthquake at the end.

WHO IS THIS MAN. *Alice MacGowan* and *Perry Newberry*. Stokes.

California and Jerry Boyne. Not so bad, but give me England. Look up their "The Seventh Passenger."

THE SQUEALER. *Edgar Wallace*. Doubleday, Doran.

Keep on remembering that crimson circle!

MURDER AT MANSON'S. *R. E. Young*. John Day.

A theatrical boarding-house in a mess. It might make a good play, except—— The villain's ability at the masquerade is just a bit thick.

GREYMARSH. *Arthur J. Rees*. Dodd, Mead.

A house-party and the sea overflowing, and a dead man in a tower. Rather too complicated.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DOWNS. *John R. Watson* and *Arthur J. Rees*. Dodd, Mead.

Quite fair, only the late war intrudes so.

THE TRAGEDY AT FREYNE. *Anthony Gilbert*. Lincoln MacVeagh.

Suicide of Sir Simon Chandos. A number of love affairs. Much jugglery.

FOOTSTEPS IN THE NIGHT. *G. Fraser-Simson*. Dutton.

"Oh! Nobson, I've got to catch the night mail." What ho,—and a queer visitor. Political intrigue.

THE CROW'S INN TRAGEDY. *Annie Haynes*. Dodd, Mead.

One of the Confraternity of St. Philip turns out to be the great Yellow Dog of the Yellow Gang. And Cyril B. Carnthwacke, an American says "no flies on," "slick," and "put up the dander."

TWO STOLEN IDOLS. *Frank L. Packard*. Doubleday, Doran.

Captain Scarface. Java Dick. And thus: "The East at its deviltry! Premonitory! His jaws clamped hard together." Also, "'I remember.' Her voice was very low. 'That was—oh, so long ago!'"

HARDICAN'S HOLLOW. *J. S. Fletcher*. Doubleday, Doran.

The old grey Fletcher, he ain't what he used to be—!

THE MURDER IN THE PALLANT. *J. S. Fletcher*. Knopf.

Do you like crime puzzles in oh-so-English cathedral towns?

ROAD END. *Woods Morrison*. Putnam.

(James) Woods Morrison is a graduate of the Movies.

THAT DINNER AT BARDOLPH'S *R. A. Walling*. William Morrow, Inc.

Wily crooks become millionaires and one preys on another. The narrator's tireless chauffeur drives furiously all over England. Two sweet love stories, a trifle sickening.

THE MAN WITH THE YELLOW EYES. *Bertram Atkey*. Lincoln MacVeagh.

"Smiler" Bunn; a long way after Raffles. Of course, an American millionaire is concerned. And a lot of whisky and soda.

THE MELODY OF DEATH. *Edgar Wallace*. Lincoln MacVeagh.

Better read "The Green Archer." Loveless marriage. A gentleman thieves from thieves. And oh, what a mother-in-law!

And finally, "The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes," by *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (Doubleday, Doran), and "The Secret of Father Brown," by *Gilbert K. Chesterton* (Harpers), maintain a standard.

An Important Biography of the Year

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Reader's Guide

CONDUCTED BY MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

H. A. M., Colorado Springs, Col., asks for books on "The Russian menace in China."

I CANNOT hope to give even the names of all the books that in some way present some phase of the Chinese situation to English-speaking readers, but of the most recent "The Chinese Puzzle," by Arthur Ransome (Houghton-Mifflin) is presented to the reading public by Lloyd George in an introduction: Mr. Ransome was the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* for the Far East. "China and the Powers," by Henry Kittredge Norton (Day), is a survey of the situation as it affects the United States and other nations; it is by the author of "The Far Eastern Republic of Siberia." "China: Where it is Today —and Why!" by Thomas F. Millard (Harcourt-Brace), covers three years past and explains the relation of the Western world to the present situation. Mr. Millard has been for thirty years in contact with the Far East and was in China through the period that his book describes. "China: a Nation in Evolution," by Paul Monroe (Macmillan), is by the director of the International Institute and Barnard Professor of Education at Teachers' College, Columbia. It is well described by Dr. Alfred Sze in a foreword as a "kindly and yet objective and clear-sighted volume," and as it has a minimum of proper names and a maximum of good-will, it will meet the needs of the "average Americans" to whom it is addressed, being a sort of survey of the whole period of change, with many excellent photographs. "The Crisis in China," by P. T. Etherton (Little, Brown) is by a British observer; a spirited and exciting work.

E. M. J., Clifton Springs, N. Y., asks if there is a good anthology of Persian poetry in English and what is there about Persian literature in general?

A PERSIAN Anthology," with a long introductory note on Persian poetry, has just been published by Dutton; the translations are by Edward Granville Brown, author of the monumental "History of Persian Literature," and the introduction is by E. Denison Ross. The original translations of Professor Jackson, in "Early Persian Poetry, from the Beginnings Down to the Time of Firdusi" (Macmillan), are now out of print, but the book is so uncommonly interesting that it should not be hard to find in some public library. There are Persian and Arabic authors in R. A. Nicholson's "Translations of Eastern Poetry and Prose" (Macmillan). The Browne history's first two volumes are called "Literary History of Persia" and published by Unwin, the other two by Macmillan.

A. A. H., Riverton, N. J., asks for anything that will help her to get the most out of a trip to California next month.

FINDING the Worth While in California," by Charles Francis Saunders (McBride), is a guide for anyone planning such a trip, I have never been to California, so I cannot say from experience how helpful it would be, but if it is as practical as the one in the same series for Europe, it is great. Mr. Saunders's "With the Flowers and Trees in California" (McBride) must certainly be added to such equipment; it will provide a stranger with any number of needed bits of delightful information. His "Under the Sky in California" is for camping trips. Stewart Edward White's "The Cabin" and "The Pass" (Doubleday, Page), make splendid outdoor reading, being experiences in the Sierras. Rider's "California" (Macmillan), is a regular guide-book with all the features that distinguish the same author's handbooks for New York and other cities. For the Yosemite, John Muir's "The Yosemite" (Century), and J. S. Chase's "Yosemite Trails, Camp and Pack-train in the Yosemite Region or the Sierra Nevada" (Houghton-Mifflin), both of which have actual guide-book possibilities as well as literary merit. For the missions, the interesting and well-illustrated books of George Wharton James, especially "Old Franciscan Missions of California" (Little, Brown), of which a new edition has been quite lately issuesd.

I said that I have never been in California, but I may get there yet. When I said in these columns last summer that I had never been west of Milwaukee, I not only received cajoling letters from real estate authorities in the Black Hills, but a formal proffer from one of the fans of this department of a bungalow in the California mountains complete with Indians and pack-mules, to be used whenever I should say I wanted it. So I have really a California address. And this very week I have almost tearfully refused an invitation to lecture in that state next April, because I sail for Europe late in that month this year and my Eastern dates are packed close. I warmly urged upon them the thought that there was another year after this.

* *

E. T., Montreal, asks for the works of outstanding Irish writers, whether novelists or dramatists, in the last two or there years.

THE name that comes first to my own mind is that of Sean O'Casey, whose literary career—at least the brilliant part of it— is scarce longer than this period, but already includes plays of such power and sympathy as "Juno and the Paycock" and "The Plough and the Stars" (Macmillan). The definitive edition of the works of William Butler Yeats (Macmillan) brings the "Autobiographies" into one volume this season, which has now reached volume six of the set. The bitter beauty of Liam O'Flaherty's prose has taken the reading world by surprise only quite lately; "The Assassin" is this year's novel (Harcourt-Brace), but "Mr. Gilhooley," "The Informer," and "Spring Sowing" were close before it. Padraic Colum has been writing more for children than for grown-ups lately, but his new book, "Creatures" (Macmillan), will do for either. St. John Ervine's new "The Wayward Man" (Macmillan), reminds one not altogether happily of his early novel "Mrs. Martin's Man," with its strong woman taking command of an apparently impossible situation, but in this case, there are two, and the man must be away from either to get a chance to be wayward, James Joyce's new novel is soon to slide into publication somewhere, and though "Ulysses" appeared before this time-limit, its importance became evident so slowly that it should be included with novels of later publication. To this period belongs the imperishable loveliness of James Stephen's "Deirdre" (Macmillan). This month we are getting the posthumous publication, "Recollections of the Irish War" (Doubleday, Doran) by the brilliant critic Darrell Figgis, who took part in it from the gun-running at Howth, and a work by Benedict Fitzpatrick on "Ireland and the Foundations of Europe" (Funk & Wagnalls), a study of Irish learning as the sanctuary of culture in the Dark ages.

THE recent inquirer for the complete poems of Farber Tabb is informed by Dodd, Mead & Co., that they are planning to issue a single volume edition which will contain practcally all of Farber Tabb's works, under the title, "The Poetry of Farber Tabb." This will be a fine five-dollar edition, and it is scheduled for March 9th.

And as this gues to press W. P. M. writes to call my attention to the complete edition of Farber Tabb's poems made by Doctor F. E. A. Litz of Johns Hopkins, and published in 1923 by the Johns Hopkins Press. The title is "Farber Tabb: a Study of His Life and Works, with Uncollected and Unpublished Poems," by Francis E. A. Litz.

WRITERS of Three Centuries" is a collection of some seventy brief essays in approciation of novelists, poets, essayists, and other writers, intended neither for schoolboys nor schoolmasters, but for intelligent readers who would be glad of help in the clarification of their own judgments. Its manner is informal, but sufficiently dignified; it was placed in many public libraries here, and these copies show an honorable decrepitude. Most of the writers considered are English, but there are several French entries and a scattering from elsewhere on the Continent. The book does not appear in the catalogue of Macrae-Smith, Philadelphia, who took over from G. W. Jacobs; someone may know more about it.

J. M. C., Asheville, N. C., in 1926 *read a sprightly biography of Mme. de. Pompadour, which she now wishes to recommend to a friend. Was one translated from the French at about this time?*

MME. DE POMPADOUR," by Marcelle Tinayre, was received with general acclaim when it first appeared in French, and its translation, by Ethel Colburn Mayne, published by Putnam soon after, keeps the literary quality as all Miss Mayne's translations may be depended upon to do.

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HENRY WILLIAMSON

With all the polished smooth running machinery which folks ride into, fly into, listen to, and live amongst nowdays, says Will James, it all strikes me like as if Mother Nature was about to take a backseat and soon be plum forgot. Thru good books is about all the chance some folks get of knowing that there's grass on some parts of this earth, and flowers, wild birds, wild animals and such.

And to such writers as Henry Williamson is due the credit of doing a great share in bringing folks back to life and making 'em see the high spots of the wonders of all that's Nature.

Like for instance, in one of his books, "Sun Brothers," there is a piece called "A Weed's Tale" in that he takes a little weed, tells of its struggles, and winds it up with human lives in a way that makes the reader wish that weed would take a holt, even if it is just a weed.

With that kind of a subject to work on, it might give an idea on what he can do when it comes to telling about the fox, the deer, and wild animals in general. It's natural history in the natural. There's stories and true to life happenings in all he tells, and as you read on you feel a whole lot like you can see and hear and smell all that's going on in the printed pages, then again there's something about the way he handles words, which makes the reading mighty smooth and a feller will go to the end without stopping to roll a smoke.

Far as I know there's four good books to Williamson's credit, there's "Sun Brothers," "The Lone Swallows," "The Old Stag," and "Tarka, the Otter," and any of them books would transform a stone wall into green leaves, a pavement into grassy sod with wild game running over it and wild birds above.

To my way of thinking that feller knows what he's talking about, and he says it all mighty daggoned well.

WILL JAMES

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Reviews

THE SONG BOOK OF THE AMERICAN SPIRIT. Collected by KATHARINE STANLEY-BROWN. Illustrated by RUDOLPH STANLEY-BROWN.

Reviewed by SIGMUND SPAETH

Author of "The Common Sense of Music"

THE nicest thing about "The Song Book of the American Spirit" is the wallpaper at the front and back. It has pictures of musical instruments, drums, trumpets, fiddles, and a banjo, and also people and other animals of many kinds. The pictures that go with the songs are pretty, too, especially the ones that fit the different lines, as in the Levee Song and Polly-Wolly Doodle. There is a Foreword that tells about the songs, and it seems to have a good many long words in it, like "heterogeneous" and "indigenous" and "inextinguishable." But if you read it carefully, you can find that "John Brown's Body" was originally a southern camp meeting tune called "Say, Brothers, will you meet us," and that the Trail Song is used for quieting cattle at night, and that rounds are a "type of canon," but not the kind you shoot off.

But did not John Philip Sousa write the tune of the Artillery Song, "Over hill, over dale"? And why is "My Evaline" in such a low key, with a slip of the pen on the last chord besides? And will southern people think it was tactful of the Stanley-Browns to put in "Marching through Georgia" with a vivid illustration of the pigs and chickens that lost their lives at that time?

After all, however, the main thing in a book like this is that it contains good tunes, tunes that nearly everybody should want to sing at some time or other, tunes by Stephen Foster, and tunes that were composed so long ago that nobody knows who wrote them.

"The Song Book of the American Spirit" should make American children sing more, and if they keep right on singing as they grow older, they will be that much happier by the time they find out what it really means to be happy.

TALES OF THE MAYFLOWER CHILDREN. By PAULINE CARRINGTON BOUVÉ. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by ROYAL J. DAVIS

THIS book belongs to historical fiction, but being a collection of tales for children, it has warrant for an even freer play of the imagination than is manfested in the ordinary historical novel. It is written by a descendant of one of the Mayflower passengers, Richard Warren, and is dedicated especially to those children who can claim a similar ancestry, but also to "all the children in America who are descended from the Pilgrims generally."

The author brings to her task the advantages of her background as an interpreter of the various sources she has consulted—Bradford's "Journal" and such authorities as Azel Ames, Arber, Steele, Goodwin, and Drake. Although a collection of tales, each one complete in itself, the book as a whole presents a consecutive story of the boyhood of William Brewster at Scrooby Palace, the sojourn of the Pilgrims in Holland, and the first six years of their life in the settlement at Plymouth. The first story, "On the Great North Road," which concerns itself with creating the atmosphere of the England of Elizabeth and James I., is one of the best in the volume. "Good-bye to Scrooby" and "They Prepare for the Voyage," showing the sadness of the departure from Holland and the misfortunes in getting away from the port of Plymouth in England, are also noteworthy.

For the young reader the book clears up the vexed question of Nonconformist, Separatist, Puritan, and Pilgrim—terms which are usually meaningless to him and, for that matter, to most of his elders. There are graphic stories of adventure with the Indians and of getting lost in the primeval forest. We see these pioneer boys and girls amid the austerity and grimness of their daily life, with its round of "stints" and household chores, stoically extracting from their heavy labors a modicum of play. Under the magic of Mrs. Bouvé's pen these wraithlike Pilgrim children, Patience, Humility, Remember, Desire, Love, and Wrestling, come vividly to life. They tease and quarrel and beg for birthday parties and hide, if only a little, their real feelings from their elders. The model John Alden makes "love knots" in the sand and puts his and Priscilla's initials in the loops, which Priscilla, passing some time after, happily sees. Suppression of emotion had not gone on too long then and inhibitions had not been invented. And a little contemplation of persons who devoted their lives to duty will perhaps not do the coming generation any harm.

On page 215 the author falls into the error she so painfully tries to avoid, that of using the true name "Anne" rather than "Elizabeth" Tilley, which she makes up, as she says, to avoid a geographic joke. In these days of fine illustration of children's books it is disappointing that the pen and ink drawings in this one are unconvincing. They appear to be pictures of dolls rather than children and thus fail to reflect the virility of the text. The book should be particularly useful as supplementary reading for history classes.

FOR the youthful reader whose desire to know more of the Father of his Country is stimulated by the anniversary of his birth, there are a group of biographies that should easily hold his interest. Foremost among them is Horace Scudder's "George Washington," of which Houghton Mifflin has recently issued a new edition with coloured illustrations. We may mention also Ethbridge Brooks's "The Story of George Washington" (Lathrop).

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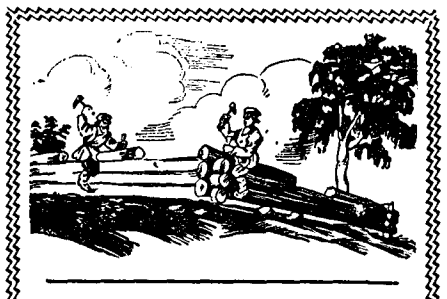

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Charm and Intimacy

WHAT part in fine printing is played by the shy element of charm has never been much considered. Yet in printing, as perhaps in human intercourse, it does more to make life livable than fine design, noble presence, or intellectual preëminence. Some collectors have charm—some haven't: as everyone knows. I recall asking a gatherer of Americana if he did not have a Gwinnett signature, and his answer that he had *two*, might, had he been less gracious, have moved me to consider grand larceny. But this department is not yet old enough to indulge in personal reminiscences, and I return to books. (Besides, books are a "substantial world" reasonably free from the pitfalls of personal chatter.) The first numbers of the *Chapbook* had charm; so did Mosher's *Bibelot*; and the first was well printed, the second, not so well, so that the quality is not a matter of technical superiority, necessarily. Again, some of the Pickering editions, set in a mean, little, modern roman have charm; so that it is not a question of Caslon type (which the *Chapbook* used)—although I feel pretty sure that Caslon type has more inherent charm than any other type face.

The immediate provocation of these considerations of charm in books is furnished by the 1928 "Bibliophile's Almanack," just at hand from the London *Fleuron*. It is a charming book, and it may help to try to find out why. In the first place it is small and intimate. Does a book—or a building—or a person—need to be small to be charming? I don't know, but the Petit Trianon is charming, and the enormous Palace is ghastly. So perhaps size, or at least "human scale," does have something to do with it. Then the cover of the Almanack is simple, harmonious, and friendly. The edges of the book protrude unduly, are in fact a little ugly; but if you will think over in detail the charming buildings, books, people, you know. . . . The text of the book is set in "Imprint," a fine book-face which our English friends can use, but which we, as yet, are not permitted to have save at uncomfortable expense. The type face, the leading, the margins—all the minutiæ of book-making are in the main excellent. The book invites to reading by the physical form in which it has been put: and then the contents! The contents page displays four subjects—"Book Clubs and Printing Societies," "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom," "Bothwell's End," and "Reviews." A diverse fare, catering to any taste, almost.

The list of book-clubs might well have been extended to include the very small number of American societies, but the English ones which alone are given, with the historical account of them by Harold Williams, are worth having in this concise form.

Mr. Herbert Read's consideration of Colonel Lawrence's famous but grotesquely made book—and of Colonel Lawrence—is worth reading. It is a bit of sanity in a field where emotion has run riot, and $20,000 has obscured all other considerations! It alone would make this volume worth possessing. The Reviews and the advertisements (in harmonious typography) are readable and in character.

NOTES ON CURRENT BOOKS

THE worst piece of modern book-making appears in Thornton Wilder's "Bridge of San Luis Rey." Copies of the first edition now sell for $20 or more, so that it is a book not doomed to immediate oblivion. It is most awkwardly made, the paper being about as flexible as a library card, and type and margins quite banal. Really, do we know as much about printing as we think we do?

"Fred Farrar's Type Book" has been issued by Harper & Brothers for the guidance of advertisers. It is a commonsense treatise on the way to lay out advertisements, with some specimens of type, printed on very objectionable coated paper, and selling for the absurd price of $5. In general its conclusions are sound enough, but good typography now as always is based on fundamental principles, and the printed advertisement will, I hope (though I have disturbing doubts) never supersede the book page as the norm in typography!

The "LXIVMOS," from 55 Greene Street, Brookline, Mass., issue number three of the *News-Letter* devoted to the collecting of the little fellows. Membership in the Club is $3 a year, and worth while to those interested in miniature books. Our enjoyment of the *News-Letter* would have been heightened by more care in its editing: such gross faults as "Walter de la Mave, of Hill House, Taylor Buck, England," and the entire omission of accents on French words, are quite unforgivable.

(*Continued on page 623*)

The Compleat Collector.

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Blasco Ibanez, living in the twentieth century, seeing and condemning the evils of his country, using his art not so much for art's sake as for a utilitarian purpose, writing always for propaganda, might almost be classed among the great men of the Victorian period. He had the same great outpouring of word and thought. His flow was of a mighty force that once started, seemed to travel on of its own momentum, like a great flood tide that knows no damming until it has spent itself. He and his works, because of their sheer, exuberant outpouring, their picturesque power and their propagandist themes, can be compared to Victor Hugo. Blasco Ibanez, like Victor Hugo, will be ranked among the immortals.

America's Influence

The Spanish novelist was probably the greatest romantic writer of his time. "The Land of Art," "The Novelist's Tour of the World" show his great versatility. During his exile he traveled much and has left most delightful impressions of Italy, Morocco, Greece, etc. America cannot help but claim him for her own. It was America's ideals, America's freedom, America's great spirit of uplift that he tried to implant in his own country which helped to make him an exile. He could not separate his brain from his heart and soul, therefore we see in all his writings the great purpose and mission which drove him on. "Mare Nostrum" (Our Sea) is not only a glorious picture of the Mediterranean, but also shows the evils of the submarine; "The Cathedral," those of the Catholic church. Ibanez is gone, but his great torrent of thought, of words, of reform, will continue to go on.

Books—New and Old

There are many novels of his still unpublished in this country. Dr. Livingston, his able translator, is working on them now—"The Feet of Venus," "The Argonauts," a fascinating tale treating of immigration, are due for publication in the Fall. "Reeds and Mud," of which Isaac Goldberg has said, "This is, in my opinion, the man's masterpiece," will be out in March.

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WE'LL make up a package of books for you on which you can't lose. And nobody need say we haven't read them, but are merely talking from hearsay. People get into the habit of saying such things about a column commentator on so many volumes. We-el, once in a while our survey is necessarily very hasty. But here's a group of volumes in which we have of late been positively engrossed. First we'll list 'em; then we'll talk about 'em.

1. DELUGE. By S. FOWLER WRIGHT. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation.
2. THE HOUSE OF DR. EDWARDES. By FRANCIS BEEDING. Little, Brown.
3. THE WAY THINGS ARE. By E. M. DELAFIELD. Harpers.
4. KIT CARSON. By STANLEY VESTAL. Houghton Mifflin.
5. ENGLAND RECLAIMED. By OSBERT SITWELL. Doubleday, Doran.

The Cosmopolitan Book Corporation advertises in the *Publishers' Weekly* a first edition of 100,000 copies for "Deluge." All we can say is it deserves five times that many readers. *S. Fowler Wright* is a new name to America, but in England he has for some time been quietly writing poetry, translating the Song of Solomon, and publishing his own novels. We read "Deluge" in the English edition, and we noted other romances of Wright's, either in process of completion or actually extant, listed on the dust-cover. A title like "The Amphibians," for instance, how that stirs the imagination after the encounter with Mr. Wright's own marvelous imagination in "Deluge"! . . . .

"Deluge" is one of the most exciting stories we have read for a very long while. It takes for granted a world-wide latter-day flood that fatally inundates terra firma with the exception of a portion of the English Midlands. It deals with certain English survivors of that calamity. It pursues its course with a vigor of intensely imagined incident that recalls the force of the earlier *H. G. Wells* in his romances such as "When the Sleeper Wakes," "The War of the Worlds," etc. It is intermittently tractarian against this modern mechanistic age, —though tractarian rather in the English Tory-squire sense, with evident love for the land, for open country undefaced by factories, for simplicity of livelihood uncluttered by all the artificialities of a commercial era. There is a noble savagery in the "asides" sardonically assailing many manifestations of our present industrial phase. But the story is the thing. It moves with a rapidity and constant excitement that holds one breathless. The survivors are thrown back upon primitive conditions. They must adapt themselves to these conditions or perish miserably. Half of them revert to the state of animals in the jungle; the rest must battle these for very existence. But that simple outline gives no idea of the art and varied interest with which the tale is unfolded. An *Edgar Rice Burroughs* might possibly have hit upon the basic conception; but an S. Fowler Wright can take that conception and make his situations so actual, his characters so convincing, his episodes so absorbing that he lifts the narrative into literature. We defy anyone to lay "Deluge" down, once begun, even the "highbrow" reader. Your emotions are stirred, your sympathies enlisted. And the ending of the story—which might so easily have surrendered to "expediency"—is highly satisfactory,—over and above the fact that it promises an equally exciting sequel (if there should ever be a sequel). . . .

Of course, "Deluge" would make a most extraordinary moving picture, if the "movies" did not ruin it in the adaptation. It has scope, a succession of thrilling incidents, battles and raids, love and death. But the "movies" could never carry it through with the integrity of purpose the author has pursued in his story-telling. And that would be a great shame. . . .

Well, chalk up S. Fowler Wright; and then turn to "The House of Doctor Edwardes," which is one of the very best horror stories of recent years, as well as one of the best tales dealing with diabolism. It gives one the dear old much-referred-to (and rarely experienced) spinal thrill. Here again the conception of the story is original and startling. But we aren't going to spoil your pleasure by giving it away. At some points all we can say is that "The House of Doctor Edwardes" very nearly touches the high water mark of "Dracula." But it also has passages of humor,—of which element, by the way, "Deluge" is quite wholly devoid (only you don't miss it!). . . .

"The Way Things Are" is in an entirely different category. E. M. Delafield has a number of books already to her credit. In "The Way Things Are" she writes of apparently commonplace English married life with a delicate irony, a deep humor, a recognition of the enormous power of "respectability" over the life of the average person, that proves her a profound human psychologist. She reveals ourselves to ourselves with unusual vividness. Her workmanship is clean-cut and highly accomplished. There are delicious moments all through the book. A man, reading it, may sometimes mildly writhe, but any intelligent person must nonetheless warm to the peerless exhibition of this author's pleasantly sardonic intelligence. . . .

Next week we shall continue this discussion; now, we seem to lack room. . . .

Anyway, we can close with the statement that *William B. Trites*, whose first two books "John Cave" and "Barbara Gwynn" were published here in 1913 and are now out of print, is attracting, fifteen years later, some attention through his "The Gypsy" (Stokes), just out. "The Gypsy" is really his seventh novel. Other books have been published either in England or privately by the author in France. Years ago *William Dean Howells* gave it as his dictum that Trites was the young writer who showed the greatest promise in American letters.

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"Each book listed in these pages," confess the Heads of the House, in a signed and shockingly immodest *apologia*, "is one which (were we not privileged to be its publishers and thereby accorded the honor of purloining the first two copies off press) we should borrow or rent, or in a period of prosperity, be sorely tempted to buy."

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OUR TIMES

Compleat Collector

(*Continued from page 621*)

SOLOMON AGAIN

FROM the Centaur Press of Philadelphia comes a new printing of the Song of Solomon, which in typography and illustrations is the final and consummate debunking of that classic from all elements of sanctity and religious connotation! The wood cuts by Wharton Esherick are what first attract attention—and at first, also, surprise. Suggestiveness could hardly go farther than in the medallion on the cover and the illustration to viii;10; and some of the blocks are of an extraordinary technical quality. But granted that the Authorized Version's quaint assumption of symbolical reference to the Church is unwarranted by the context, this edition of the Song, as a frankly pagan love-song, is decidedly of interest. The type face, one of the recent European importations, is appropriate both to the text and to the illustrations, and the book is well executed by the Pynson Printers. Although of proper size for an altar book, we doubt if it will be "read in the churches," although worthy of a place on the shelves of the collector of erotic editions.

A PROTEST AGAINST BUNK

A CORRESPONDENT writes in protest against certain jazz advertising as follows. His objection to such methods in advertising, a really admirable article, meets with my hearty approval.

"This morning's mail brings a loud broadside from the exploiters of Encyclopedia Britannica. They are going to have another "bargain" sale in *honor* of the 160th anniversary. It's an "epoch-making (*sic*) event," of "incomparable value," a "marvelous index volume," "if you ACT quickly," etc. It has congratulations from ex-Governor Hughes, ex-premier Borden, the president of Marshall, Field & Co., and other more or less eminent scholars, and probably these will be supplemented by others from Tom-tom Hefflin and Al Smith, Tunney, Lindbergh and Charlie Chaplin. Ain't it sicknin'?"

TYPE FACSIMILE REPRINTS

OF the fourth series of these reprints we have received from the Oxford University Press the following: Matthew Prior's "Occasional Verses," printed from copies of the single-leaf editions, 1702-1719; Thomas Gray's "Elegy wrote in a Country Church Yard," first edition, 1751; Samuel Johnson's "The Vanity of Human Wishes," 1749; and William Collins's "Ode" on the death of Mr. Thompson, 1749.

Printed at the Clarendon Press by John Johnson, in editions of 550 or 750 copies each, carefully reset in the type of the originals, or as closely as the ample resources of the Oxford printing-office allow, these type facsimile reprints are invaluable to the Compleat Collector. For purpose of minute study they are doubtless less valuable than photographic facsimiles would be, but in their fidelity to the originals in type and manner (though it has not always been possible to retain the exact margins of the first editions), as well as in their simple and inexpensive binding, they make handsome and valuable additions to the library. If the frailties of the XVIIIth century are to be drawn from their dread abode, we like to see it done with the simplicity and candor of these reprints.

"THE INDISPENSABLE THINGS"

FROM the Bibliographica Typographica, under the editorship of Herbert Reichner, 19 Tiefer Graben, Vienna, comes a formidable list of books on printing. There is an amplified and revised edition of "Modern Fine Printing in the United States"; the first edition being out of print. The second volume in the series, "Flowers and Ornaments" of the Viennese printer Tatner (1760) is announced as now ready. To come are volumes on Civilité type, German typography in the Goethe period, a very much to be desired "Updike and the Merrymount Press at Boston," amply illustrated and with an introduction by George Parker Winship (we long to see what a German will do with Mr. Updike—and what Mr. Updike may do with the German editor!); a facsimile of Dürer's "Alphabet" of 1525; German type specimen books of the XVIIIth century by Gustav Mori; "Five Centuries of Printers' Marks"; "Modern Fine printing in Czechoslovakia"; etc. The specimen illustrations shown in the attractive announcement are up to the usual high quality of German work, and the series comprises a surprisingly interesting variety of subjects. R.

Points of View

Addendum

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

In Mr. Samuel Scoville's letter to *The Saturday Review* for January seventh, he says, "It is a biographer's duty to state the facts fairly." He doesn't say that a commentator on the biographer ought to state them fairly, too. It seems to upset Mr. Scoville that Mr. Hibben went to *Woodhull & Claflin's Weekly* for material for his life of the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher. Says Mr. Scoville, "This was a publication at one time suppressed by the authorities as an obscene paper and Victoria Woodhull served a term of imprisonment for publishing the same." The facts are that Victoria Woodhull was arrested on the complaint of Anthony Comstock; she went to jail until her exorbitant bail could be paid. She never was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. She was acquitted in her final trial, definitely. Mr. Beecher wasn't.

In connection with the life of Victoria Woodhull which I am writing, I have examined much of Mr. Hibben's material, though not all of it. One has only to look at Mr. Hibben's bibliography; one has only to glance through his fascinating book (if anybody can glance at it without devouring it), to know that it is founded on careful scholarship.

Says Mr. Scoville, " . . . I do not object to Mr. Hibben's using any authority whatever. I do object to his not using them all." Mr. Scoville hasn't used all of Mr. Hibben's authorities either! Moreover, Mr. Scoville objects to "his using the statements of Victoria Woodhull and omitting those of Julia Ward Howe." I think Victoria Woodhull had opportunities for knowing Mr. Beecher that were denied Julia Ward Howe.

And it is amusing for anyone to be solemn about a publication "suppressed by the authorities" as obscene. Who are the authorities and what is obscenity? Maybe they know the answers in Boston, now!

EMANIE SACHS.

New York.

Exception Taken

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
SIR:

In Mr. Sayler's recent review of "Behold, the Bridegroom," in your columns, his first four paragraphs might well be a tangent beguiling to a chatty essayist, but scarcely an elucidation or evaluation of the central idea which I believe clearly motivates Mr. Kelly's brave study. Indeed, Mr. Sayler in hugging the pining-girl theme, nowhere mentions what he avers the playwright delivered from a platform. If Mr. Kelly has made his point so plain, it is curious that the critic missed it.

My recollection of the speeches and the drift of the story on the opening night leads me to consider "Behold, the Bridegroom" not as a psychologized "East Lynne," but as a commentary on the spiritual bankruptcy that trails the sensitive young woman who squanders the emotional and ideal aspirations of her youth in hectic living, exhausting thrills, and cheapening experiences. When a genuine romance sprouts, there is in her barren heart no soil to give nourishment and in her debased mind no dewy thoughts to stimulate efflorescence. That she had the fineness of nature to feel ghastly horror over how her misuse of life had betrayed potential happiness informs the close of the play with tragic beauty. That her home life and associates had swung her into the whirl of the jazz age with never a pause for stock-taking gives the play social significance. That beneath the metallic hardness and engrossment with false values there had awakened understanding and appreciation of finer loyalties comes as a revelation to the Bridegroom all too late, but to the audience, I fancy, in good time as an indication that sympathy here must solve a psychological phenomenon of the time.

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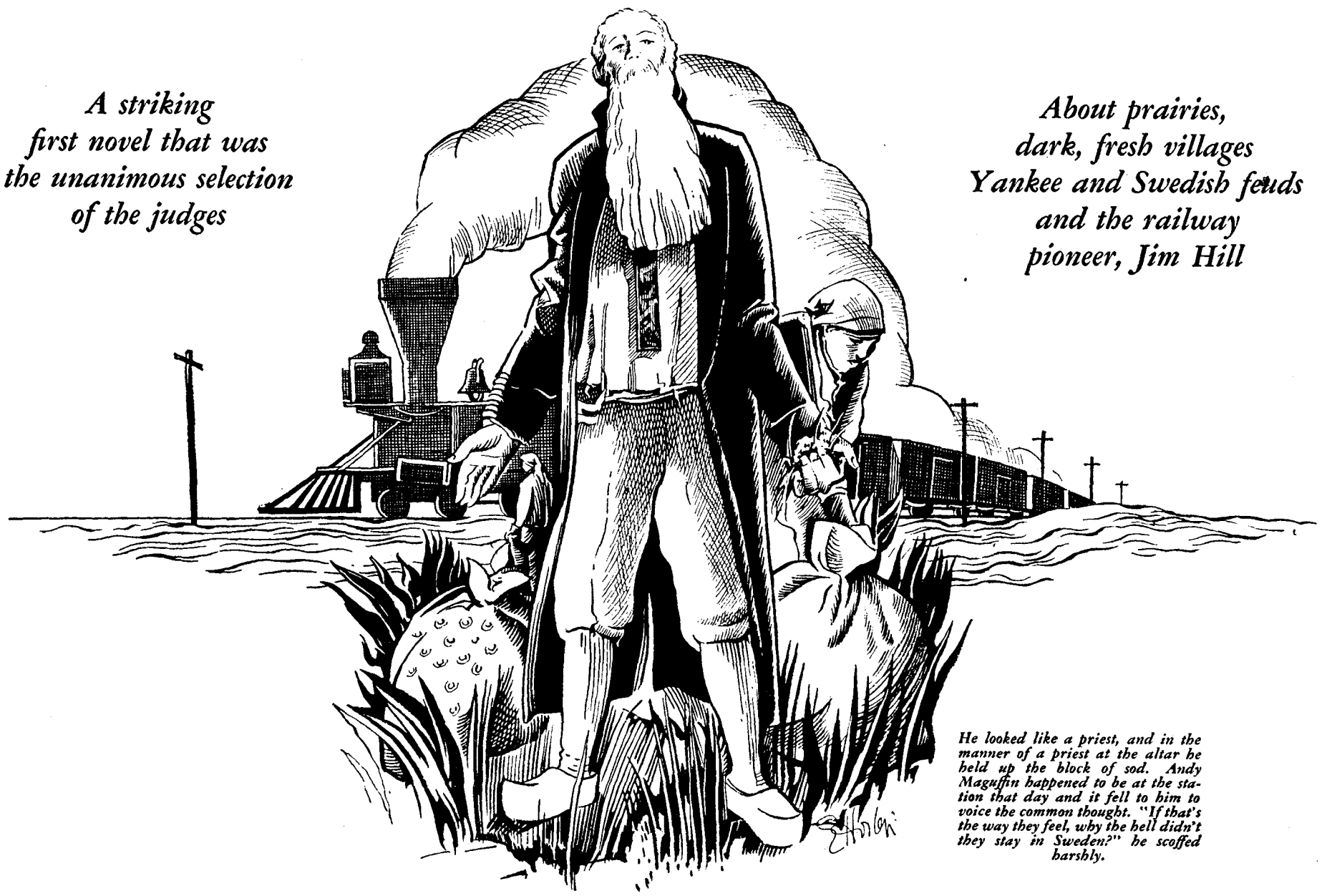
A striking first novel that was the unanimous selection of the judges

About prairies, dark, fresh villages Yankee and Swedish feuds and the railway pioneer, Jim Hill



He looked like a priest, and in the manner of a priest at the altar he held up the block of sod. Andy Maguffin happened to be at the station that day and it fell to him to voice the common thought. "If that's the way they feel, why the hell didn't they stay in Sweden?" he scoffed harshly.

HILL COUNTRY

The $7500 *prize biographical novel by* Ramsey Benson

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